Independent Final/Midterm Evaluation of the Community-Based Innovations to Reduce Child Labor Through Education Project (CIRCLE) in Latin America

Winrock International
Cooperative Agreement Numbers—
CIRCLE I: E-9-K-2-0048
CIRCLE II: E-9-K-4-0005

2007

MACRO INTERNATIONAL INC.

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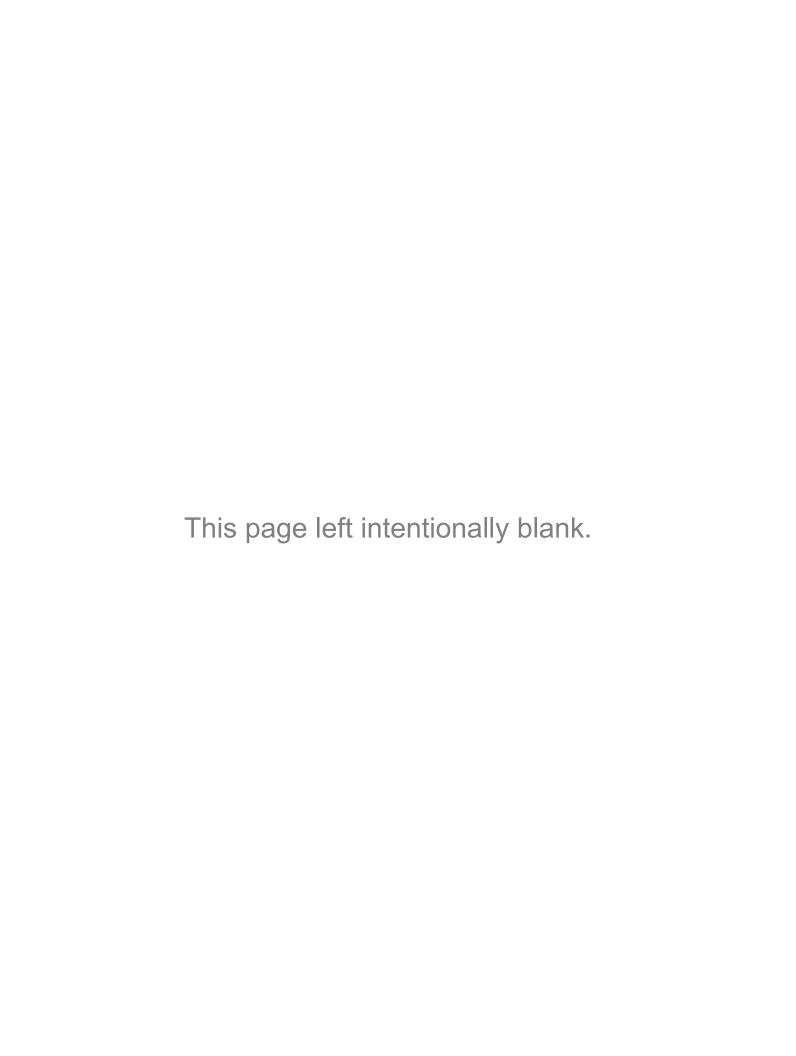
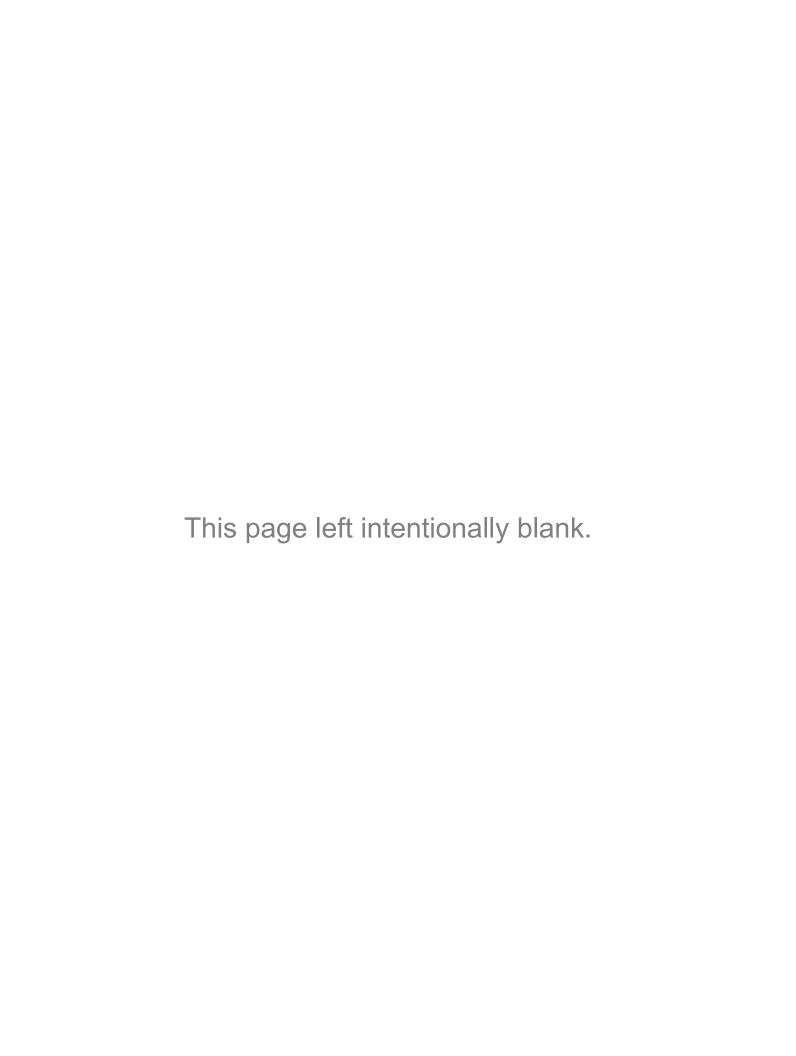Winrock International
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BP	Best Practice
CB	Capacity Building
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CL	Child Labor
CLASSE	Child Labor Alternatives through Sustainable Systems in Education
EFA	Education for All
EI	Education Initiative
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
HQ	Headquarters
ILAB	Bureau of International Labor Affairs
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
LA	Latin America
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTE	Midterm Evaluation
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
OCFT	Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RFP	Request for Proposals
RLM	Regional Launch Meeting
RM	Regional Manager
RSC	Regional Selection Committee
TdH	Terre de Hommes
TOR	Terms of Reference
TPR	Technical Progress Report
UAC	Urgent Action Contract
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USDOL	U.S. Department of Labor
USG	U.S. Government

WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labor
W/P	Withdrawn/Prevented
WI	Winrock International

Acronyms Pertaining to NGOs

AMF	*Asociación Mujer Família* (Peru)
CEBIAE	*Centro Boliviano de Investigación y Acción Educativas* (Bolivia)
CEIPA	*Centro Ecuménico de Integración Pastoral* (Guatemala)
CENDHEC	*Centro Dom Helder Câmara de Estudos e Ação Social* (Brazil)
CIRD	*Fundación Comunitaria Centro de Información y Recursos para el Desarrollo* (Paraguay)
CR	*Casa Renascer* (Brazil)
ICC	*Instituto de Capacitação Comunitária* (Brazil)
ISAT	*Instituto Salud y Trabajo* (Peru)
JUCONI	*Fundación Junto con los Niños* (Ecuador)
OA	*Obispo Anaya* (Bolivia)
PAMI	*Programa de Apoyo para la Salud Materno Infantil y para la Salud de Otros Grupos de Riesgo* (Guatemala)
PETI	*Programa de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil* [Program for the Eradication of Child Labor] (Brazil)
RIPNA	*Red Interinstitucional para la Niñez y Adolescencia* (Bolivia)
SIDES	*Servicios Integrales para el Desarrollo* (Bolivia)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In July 2002, Winrock International (WI) signed a five-year, US$5 million cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) to support its Education Initiative (EI) through Community-Based Innovations to Reduce Child Labor Through Education (CIRCLE I). WI subsequently signed a four-year, US$3 million agreement (CIRCLE II) in 2004 for a second phase of the CIRCLE project—continuing its work with 101 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in 23 countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. WI also signed an agreement for US$500,000, added to CIRCLE I for the Sierra Leone component.

Activities under CIRCLE I and II are designed to support the four goals of ILAB's Education Initiative:

1. To raise awareness of the importance of education for all children and mobilize a wide array of actors to improve and expand education infrastructures.

2. To strengthen formal and transitional education systems that encourage working children and those at risk of working to attend school.

3. To strengthen national institutions and policies on education and child labor.

4. To ensure the long-term sustainability of these efforts.

The project purposes of CIRCLE are: (1) at-risk children are prevented from child labor and educated in programs relevant to communities in which they live; and (2) community-based educational innovations aimed at preventing child labor are developed and documented.

This report describes in detail the evaluation of CIRCLE I and II projects in Latin America. Six CIRCLE NGO partners (three in Brazil and three in Bolivia) were visited during May 2007—representing nearly half of the 14 subcontracts that have been implemented in the region. Six other NGO partners provided virtual evaluation input via e-mail.

Overall, the evaluation found that implementing partners have done an excellent job of achieving their project outputs and meeting or exceeding their student completion targets. Based on the 10 NGOs providing direct education services (with two ongoing), nearly 1,650 children have completed CIRCLE programs (including formal and nonformal education) in Latin America to date. With the exception of two subcontracts that were terminated for performance and legal compliance issues, all NGO projects have been implemented as planned.

While WI started reporting against "common indicators" under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) in March 2005, disaggregation of the number of students withdrawn or prevented from child labor was not instituted until early 2006. Although these data are incomplete, best estimates are that 242 students have been withdrawn from child labor and 670 have been prevented from entering to date. The types of child labor prevalent in the project areas range from the worst forms as defined in International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 182 (e.g., prostitution, drug trafficking, mining activities, work in garbage dumps)

to forms that are not exploitive or hazardous (e.g., shoe shining, car washing, sales of newspapers and small goods, helping their parents).

As seen in the project title, a strong emphasis of CIRCLE was to identify and promote innovative approaches to reducing child labor through education. The NGOs in Latin America have done a good job of demonstrating a variety of creative interventions and "best practices," which are summarized in Table 3. In the communities visited, NGO subcontractors have done a good job of fostering local involvement/ownership of activities, working effectively with various governmental and nongovernmental partners, and increasing public awareness about the hazards of child labor and the value of education. This bodes well for the sustainability of many CIRCLE efforts.

WI staff members in both headquarters and the regional office in Brazil have done a very good job managing such a vast and complex project undertaking. Their subcontract management—including capacity building for NGOs and oversight through personal contact and site visits—has been effective in ensuring that activities are implemented as planned. Indeed, both WI and NGO staff members have demonstrated great commitment in their work with students, teachers, parents, communities, and the larger public. Awareness has clearly grown in target areas about the hazards of child labor, and progress has been made in the formulation and implementation of better policies at the local and regional level. It is also notable that the prospects for sustainability of many CIRCLE activities are positive).
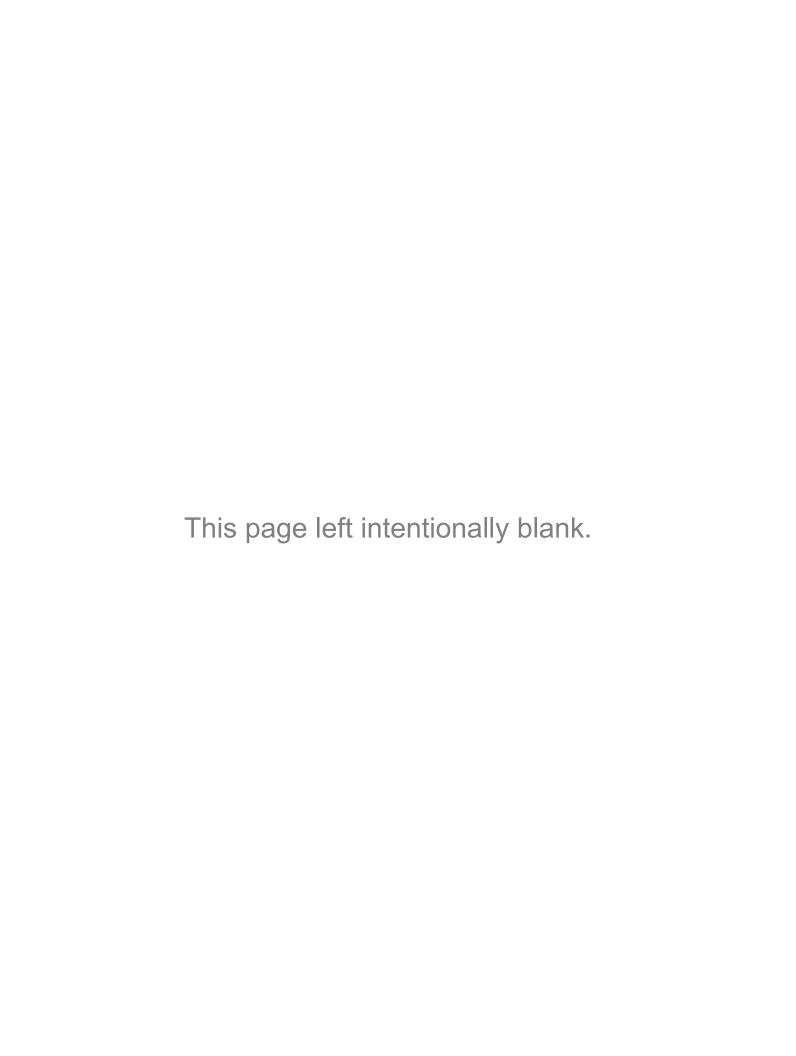
In terms of challenges, the work in Latin America has presented an additional level of complexity due to the need to operate fully in three languages: English, Spanish, and Portuguese. This work has required considerable human and financial resources, which WI underestimated in the project design phase, and which should be addressed in future USDOL projects. Another continuing challenge—shared with other EI projects around the world—is widespread confusion about how to track and report USDOL common indicators. More training and clearer guidance are definitely needed in this area.

Key recommendations pertaining to sustainability include the following:

- WI HQ should strategize and develop its ideas about what a "CIRCLE III" project would look like—including how to scale up some of the successful best practices (BPs), innovations, and lessons learned under CIRCLE, as well as how to operationalize the content of the BP Compendium with NGO partners combating child labor. Closer partnerships with the ILO should also be sought.

- WI should also seek funding to continue its work with NGO partners in select countries. One opportunity to do so is ILAB's upcoming solicitation for applications to address exploitive child labor internationally. Since Bolivia is one of 10 target countries, WI is well-positioned to take its CIRCLE work with PROCESO, Obispo Anaya (OA), and *Centro Boliviano de Investigación y Acción Educativas* (CEBIAE) to another level. All three partners are good implementers, have identified critical ongoing needs in their communities, and have activities ripe for expansion.

In sum, the holistic approach undertaken by most NGOs in Latin America to closely involve four key stakeholder groups—students, parents, schools, and communities—in efforts to mitigate child labor through education has proven very effective, since ownership and participation by all four groups is vital. Through its support to a wide variety of short-term, innovative projects, CIRCLE has successfully planted the seeds for longer term impact, realizing that impact is now in the hands of its NGO partners, who will continue to work in CIRCLE communities.

Macro International Inc. prepared this evaluation according to guidelines prescribed by USDOL's Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT). The evaluation was conducted and documented by Danielle Roziewski, an independent international development consultant, in collaboration with USDOL/OCFT staff, members of the project team, and stakeholders in Brazil and Bolivia.

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I   PROJECT BACKGROUND

Since 1995, the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) has received over US$470 million from Congress—administered by its Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB)—to address international child labor issues. Within ILAB, the Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) supports U.S. child labor policy principally through the International Labor Organization's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (ILO-IPEC), and its own Child Labor Education Initiative (EI).

The EI nurtures the development, health, safety, and enhanced future employability of children around the world by increasing access to basic education for children removed from child labor or at risk of entering it. Eliminating child labor depends in part on improving educational access, quality, and relevance. Without improving educational quality and relevance, children withdrawn from child labor may not have viable alternatives and may return to work or resort to other hazardous, unhealthy means of subsistence.
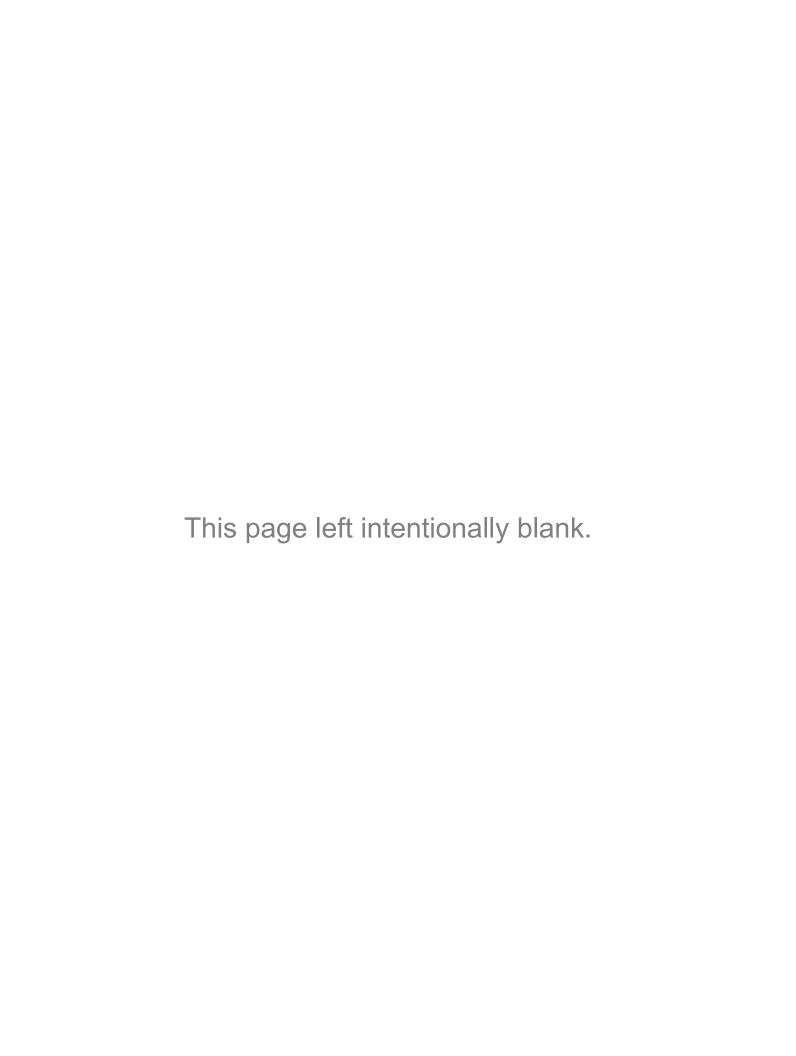
In July 2002, Winrock International (WI) signed a five-year, US$5 million cooperative agreement with USDOL to implement Community-Based Innovations to Reduce Child Labor Through Education (CIRCLE I), a global EI project aimed at withdrawing and preventing children from exploitive child labor by expanding access to and improving the quality of basic education and supporting the four EI objectives:

1. To raise awareness of the importance of education for all children and mobilize a wide array of actors to improve and expand education infrastructures.

2. To strengthen formal and transitional education systems that encourage working children and those at risk of working to attend school.

3. To strengthen national institutions and policies on education and child labor.

4. To ensure the long-term sustainability of these efforts.

WI subsequently signed a four-year, US$3 million cooperative agreement with USDOL (CIRCLE II) in 2004 for a second phase of the CIRCLE project,[1] and US$500,000 was added to CIRCLE I in 2004 for Sierra Leone.

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[1] In addition, US$750,000 was set aside for a two-year pilot project in West Africa: Child Labor Alternatives through Sustainable Systems in Education (CLASSE).

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II   PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The CIRCLE project aims to prevent or reduce child labor through education[2] by identifying and promoting innovative, locally developed, and community-based pilot projects and documenting their "best practices" (BPs) and replicable aspects. CIRCLE project activities contribute directly to the four EI objectives and the two project purposes identified by WI:

- At-risk children are prevented from child labor and educated in programs relevant to communities in which they live

- Community-based educational innovations aimed at preventing child labor are developed and documented.

CIRCLE is implemented through a variety of subcontracts signed with national nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (and one in Albania), which design and implement projects in line with CIRCLE objectives. The WI office in Arlington, Virginia, coordinates the project through regional field offices on three continents:

Winrock Office	Countries Managed from the Office
Africa—Bamako, Mali	Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Albania
South Asia—Kathmandu, Nepal	Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan
Southeast Asia—Manila, Philippines	Cambodia, Philippines, Vietnam
Latin America—Salvador, Brazil	Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru

Under CIRCLE I and II, 1,200 NGO proposals were submitted for funding in response to five solicitations—three global and two for Sierra Leone. As a point of clarification, CIRCLE I and II were the funding sources from USDOL, while the three solicitation rounds corresponded to the Requests for Proposals (RFPs) issued by WI. The Round 1 RFP was disseminated in mid-2003 and NGO awards were funded with CIRCLE I resources. The Round 2 RFP was published in September 2004 and NGO awards were funded with both CIRCLE I and II resources. The Round 3 RFP was issued in February 2006 (awards funded with both CIRCLE I and II resources).

Regional Selection Committees (RSCs) made up of specialists in relevant fields worked on a voluntary basis to review proposals and make funding recommendations for small, medium, and large subcontracts. Awards ranged from US$9,000 to US$113,000 for 6- to 24-month projects. Two- to three-month Urgent Action Contracts (UACs), ranging from US$3,000 to US$5,000 were also available for urgent interventions, and two commissioned contracts ranging around US$10,000 took place as policy workshops. Regional Launch Meetings (RLMs) on each

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[2] Education, for this purpose, includes both educating the public through information campaigns and targeted instruction, such as traditional classroom education, vocational or alternative education, or teacher training. Source: Project Document under USDOL and Winrock International Cooperative Agreement.

continent brought successful NGO subcontractors together for orientation and training in CIRCLE systems and USDOL requirements.

By April 2007, 101 NGO projects had been funded in 23 countries: 42 in Asia, 40 in Africa, 18 in Latin America (LA), and one in Albania. Overall, 23,000 children had benefited from educational opportunities as a result of CIRCLE initiatives, and thousands of other adults and children had participated in awareness raising, advocacy, and training activities.

As this vast and complex project draws to a close,[3] the emphasis is increasingly on the identification and documentation of BPs. WI has developed a process of peer reviews of NGO projects on the basis of six criteria: effectiveness, replicability, sustainability, innovation, educational relevance, and stakeholder involvement. The BP review process includes 73 outside evaluators and 22 WI staff members around the world. Post-evaluation summaries of individual projects will inform the BP document that is due to be completed toward the end of 2007.

Other aspects of CIRCLE include the creation of a WI website,[4] "spotlight stories" from each NGO, and a series of newsletters in several languages. Capacity building has aimed to enable NGOs to cope with CIRCLE financial and administration systems, proposal development, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) requirements. The development of strategies for the sustainability of project initiatives has been encouraged, and periodic site visits from WI personnel have supported and monitored project implementation.

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[3] CIRCLE I in September 2007, due to a project extension approved by USDOL, and CIRCLE II in April 2008.
[4] Available at http://circle.winrock.org.

III   EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

CIRCLE I started in July 2002 and is due for final evaluation in 2007. CIRCLE II started in April 2004 and is due for a midterm evaluation in 2007, so the current evaluation covers both requirements.

The evaluation reviews and assesses the activities carried out under the USDOL cooperative agreements with WI, particularly the progress of the project toward reaching its stated targets and objectives. Taking into consideration all the activities implemented over the life of the project, the evaluation addresses issues of project design, implementation, lessons learned, sustainability, and recommendations for future projects. The evaluation also aims to—

- Help individual organizations identify areas of good performance and areas where project implementation can be improved.

- Assist OCFT to learn more about what is or is not working in terms of the overall conceptualization and design of EI projects within the broad OCFT technical cooperation program framework.

- Assess the degree to which objectives relevant to the country-specific situation they address have been achieved.

- Assess progress in terms of children's working and educational status (i.e., withdrawal and prevention from the worst forms of child labor; enrollment; retention; and completion of educational programs).

Evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations are grouped under the major headings below. Findings are presented according to the specific questions raised in the USDOL Terms of Reference (TOR, see Annex F).

1. **Overall Project Design/Implementation** covers how the CIRCLE project fits with EI objectives, within the WI portfolio, and within national government child labor and education policies and practices. Initial implementation, monitoring, and sustainability strategies are analyzed in light of experience and progress toward project objectives assessed. The concepts of innovation and BP—key aspects of CIRCLE—are also reviewed.

2. **Subcontract Design/Implementation** examines NGO partners' progress toward meeting the goals of their individual projects and the degree of satisfaction and ownership of activities by communities. The measurement of USDOL's common indicators is assessed, as is the effectiveness of the selection process and relevance and innovation of project design.

3. **Partnership and Coordination** looks at how WI and NGO subcontractors have met the challenges of working together and networking at national/international levels, particularly in relation to national (and local) child labor and education policies and practice. The functioning of RSCs is examined, as well as any links with other U.S.-funded child labor initiatives in the project zone.

4. **Management and Budget** assesses how WI has administered technical and financial aspects of project implementation by examining the systems and processes that have been put in place, and the level of NGO satisfaction with the orientation, training, and support they have received.

5. **Sustainability and Impact** examines to what degree CIRCLE-initiated education strategies to prevent and reduce child labor are continuing/may continue after the end of subcontracts and their impact in target communities. Potential for replication or scale up is assessed, as is the possible tradeoff between short-term projects fostering innovation versus longer term projects focusing on sustainability. This section will also examine the future potential of the Best Practices document.

The primary purpose of the evaluation is to learn what works or is not working with the project, which may have implications for the project itself or for the OCFT program as a whole. The evaluation is an objective inquiry that can facilitate corrective action and encourage the maximization and reinforcement of successful aspects of the project. Ultimately, the purpose is to assure that children's needs are being met through project interventions and that the best possible use is made of emerging Best Practices. It is, above all, a learning process.

IV EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was carried out by three evaluators, one each for Asia, Africa, and LA. This regional report is thus one of three that are summarized in a global analysis and synthesis of regional findings. The key stages of the evaluation methodology are outlined below:

- Prior to fieldwork, a **desk review** of key project documents was completed (see Annex B).

- **Countries and projects were selected** in consultation with WI based on practical considerations such as location and distance. The selection process also ensured the inclusion of both active and completed projects, CIRCLE I and II projects, and awards of varying amounts (see Annex E). Brazil was chosen since it is home to the LA regional office, and Bolivia because it has the most NGO projects (four awarded, one of which was terminated). The evaluator thus visited project activities and staff members from six NGOs (three in each country)—nearly half of the 14 projects implemented regionally.

The evaluator interviewed a total of 282 stakeholders either personally (at project sites) or virtually (via e-mail and phone). Interviews in Brazil were conducted in Portuguese, while those in Bolivia were conducted in Spanish. On rare occasions in Bolivia, Spanish translation was needed for the evaluator to understand Quechua-speaking parents.

Table 1: NGO Subcontractors Visited in Latin America

Projects funded in Round 2

NGO Name	City, Country	CIRCLE Funding Request	CIRCLE Funding Award	Project Period (+extension)	Project Name
Proceso Servicios Educativos	Santa Cruz, Bolivia	$150,570 (18 mos.)	$10,000	6/1/05 to 11/30/05 (+1 month)	Strengthening Education Systems: Curriculum Design targets hard working and abused adolescents to continue primary studies
Sociedade Primeiro de Maio	Salvador, Brazil	$99,990	$100,000	6/1/05 to 11/30/06 (+1 month)	Strengthening Education Systems: Street Children

Projects funded in Round 3

NGO Name	City, Country	CIRCLE Funding Request	CIRCLE Funding Award	Project Period (+extension)	Project Name
Casa Renascer	Natal, Brazil	$57,650 (12 mos.)	$30,000	7/10/06 to 4/10/07	Strengthening Strategies to Combat Sexual and Commercial Exploitation of Children and Adolescents in Natal
CEBIAE	Potosí, Bolivia	$97,500	$77,500	7/17/06 to 7/17/07	Prevention and Eradication of CL in the Potosi City Education Program

NGO Name	City, Country	CIRCLE Funding Request	CIRCLE Funding Award	Project Period (+extension)	Project Name
CENDHEC	Recife, Brazil	$59,771	$55,000	7/10/06 to 7/10/07	From Child Labor to Participation
Programa Obispo Anaya	Cocha-bamba Bolivia	$24,015	$24,000	11/1/06 to 10/31/07	Strengthening Educational Systems for Child Laborers in Garbage Environments

- **Interviews in the United States:** Prior to the regional fieldwork in May, the three evaluators came together in Washington to meet with WI HQ staff and past/present Project Managers at USDOL. They also interviewed the consultant developing the BP document and briefly visited a child labor conference on Capitol Hill.[5] The visit also allowed the evaluation team to finalize all data collection instruments and ensure coherence in its approach across regions.

- The evaluator's fieldwork commenced at WI's **LA regional office** in Brazil, where WI staff members were interviewed in great detail about all aspects of CIRCLE design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, management, and sustainability. Valuable input was also provided by RSC members on the NGO selection process, and by BP reviewers regarding their evaluation process.

- At all six sites, the evaluator conducted **small group interviews with NGO sub-contractor staff** responsible for the project. A semi-structured interview guide (see Annex G) allowed her to probe issues related to project design, implementation, monitoring, reporting, sustainability, partnerships, and the local/national child labor (CL) and education context. **Feedback regarding the evaluator's observations and findings** was provided throughout her visits so that useful discussion and interchange could take place with NGO staff members.

- During **community visits,** the evaluator facilitated semi-structured interviews with small groups of past/present students, teachers and school directors, parents (e.g., school management committees), local leaders, and representatives from partner organizations to talk about CL and education, activities initiated under CIRCLE, and ideas for the future. This process enabled the evaluator to assess the degree of community involvement and ownership of activities, their level of satisfaction with project achievements, and approaches/attitudes concerning education and CL. Whenever possible, project activities were visited in order to observe the mix of participants, the atmosphere and dynamics between staff and youth, the quality and content of the activity they were engaged in, the physical environment, available materials, etc.; in other words, whether the activity seemed likely to appropriately meet targeted objectives.
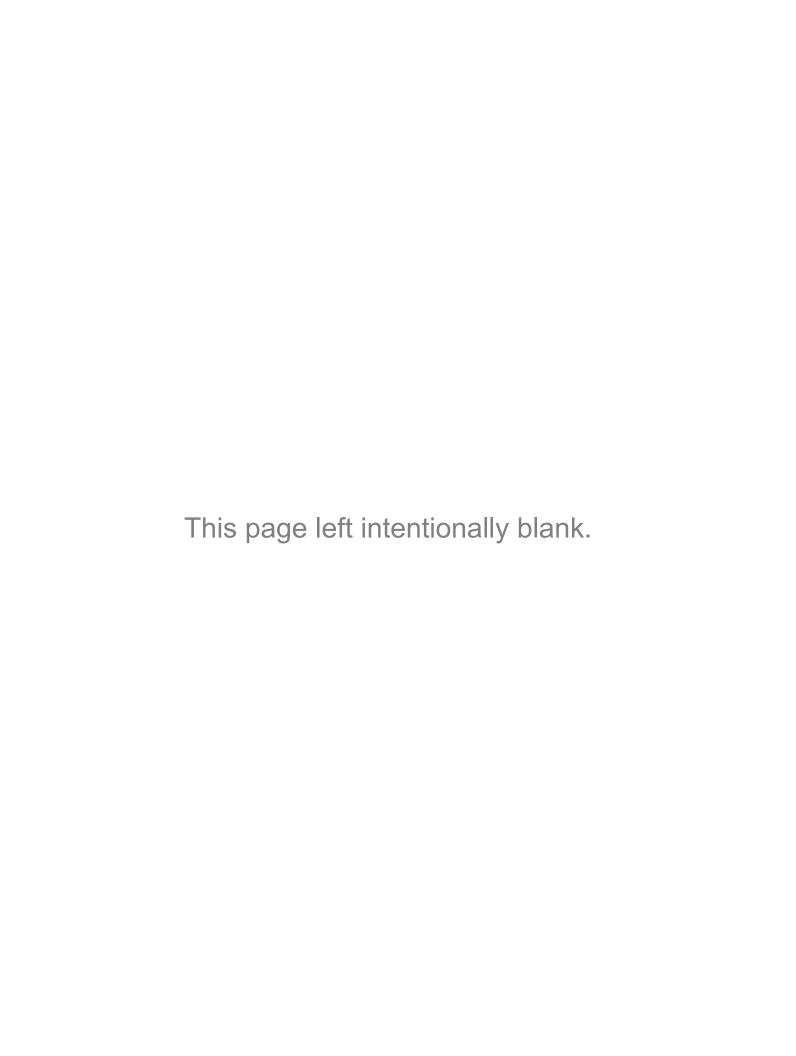
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[5] The event brought together former child laborers from Colombia, Ghana, and India with U.S. high school students as part of the Global Campaign for Education's annual week of action.

The 217 community interviews are summarized below (see Annex A for more details):

Children in project	68 (35 boys and 33 girls)
Children not in project	5 (4 boys and 1 girl)
Parents	49 (45 women and 4 men)
Teachers	37 (26 women and 11 men)
Leaders	30 (17 women and 13 men)
Others (e.g., partners)	28 (20 women and 8 men)

- The evaluator facilitated a **Stakeholders' Meeting** in Recife, Brazil, to bring together a broad range of actors who are/were involved with CIRCLE, education, and/or child labor issues. This meeting enabled the evaluator to validate her findings from CIRCLE projects in Brazil and to facilitate discussion about the broader issues of education and child labor, as well as the potential for sustainability of CIRCLE activities.

- An **e-mail survey** (translated into Spanish, see Annex H) of the views and perspectives of NGO subcontractors that the evaluator was not able to visit consisted of questions concerning issues such as innovation, capacity building, project sustainability, the strengths and challenges of the overall experience of working with Winrock, and suggestions for the future. Of the eight e-mails sent out, six NGOs responded. Their responses are integrated into the report. A separate e-mail survey (in Portuguese and Spanish, see Annex I) was sent to nine RSC members and BP reviewers to solicit their input on those important CIRCLE processes. Two people responded to the second survey.

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V   FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Before elaborating on the evaluation findings, a brief introduction is provided to the six NGOs visited in Latin America:

- *Sociedade Primeiro de Maio.* Located on the outskirts of Salvador, Brazil, *Primeiro de Maio* is approaching its 30th anniversary as an active community association of well-organized residents dedicated to improving the difficult living conditions in *Novos Alagados*. *Cluberê*, its innovative nonformal education program, was founded in 1993 and enjoys full support from the community. *Cluberê's* methodology and curriculum are very participatory, constructivist, and student-centered. Not only are youth treated as transformational change agents, they themselves choose topics of study and develop lesson plans to ensure relevance. Combined with art, theater, culture, sports, music, and other classes, the educational environment is so enjoyable that few students drop out of the program.

- *Casa Renascer.* Headquartered in Natal, Brazil, CR has a 15-year history of acting in defense of the rights of children and adolescents and providing psychosocial assistance to victims of sexual violence. Child labor was a relatively new area of work for the NGO, but there was a logical connection with its work on sexual exploitation—one of the worst forms of child labor (WFCL). CR targeted two schools in some of the most violent communities and worked holistically with students, teachers, parents, and community members on issues related to domestic and sexual violence, parenting skills, and child labor and education.

- *Centro Dom Helder Câmara de Estudos e Ação Social* **(CENDHEC).** Founded in Recife, Brazil, in 1989, CENDHEC has considerable experience advocating for the rights of children and adolescents. The NGO's involvement with CL issues dates back to 1998 through the State Forum and Commission on Child Labor, and it has a particular focus on domestic child labor—a relatively invisible form of CL recently classified as a worst form in Brazil. CENDHEC is well-connected with both governmental and nongovernmental actors and is viewed as a leader in this milieu. Youth participation is also an important element as CENDHEC is forming teams of youth monitors and child labor prevention agents to work proactively in communities.

- **PROCESO.** Located in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, PROCESO has focused on education issues for 15 years and had worked on CL issues before its short CIRCLE project. Because the NGO offers more methodological support than direct services, it partnered with a formal/nonformal education center serving child laborers and at-risk youth to develop and test a prototype of an educational software game to teach language and math skills. It also developed guidelines for a new "diversified" curriculum that is more responsive to the learning needs and life challenges of child laborers.

- ***Programa Obispo Anaya.*** The Obispo Anaya (OA) school was founded in 1966 as one of the first in the *Fe y Alegría* system in Cochabamba, Bolivia. The OA program with Christian Children's Fund started in 2001. In the past few years, OA has helped to expand a small, nonformal "educational annex" into a formal, graded school serving 220 students and offering after-school programs. The school in Kara Kara is the only one near a rapidly growing squatter settlement in the vicinity of a massive trash dump—upon which much of the community's livelihood depends. OA plans to withdraw children working in the dump and in other forms of CL, and prevent other youth from starting.

- **CEBIAE.** CEBIAE was founded in 1976 in La Paz, Bolivia. According to its website,[6] CEBIAE focuses on research, training, materials production, and educational services. Under CIRCLE, it is working in the city of Potosí to increase public awareness about the hazards of CL—particularly mining, a worst form—as well as to strengthen the formulation and implementation of public policies. It is doing so through a newly created interinstitutional network that focuses broadly on the interests of children and adolescents, including child labor. CEBIAE is both well-established and regarded in Bolivia.

5.1   OVERALL PROJECT DESIGN/IMPLEMENTATION

5.1.1   Findings

1. *Even though CIRCLE's goals are closely associated with the four EI goals, does the project design seem to be adequately supporting the four EI goals? If not, which ones are not being supported and why not?*

The EI goal that is most strongly supported in LA is strengthening educational services. Of the 16 subcontracts awarded, ISAT and CEBIAE were the only two NGOs that did not work directly with student cohorts. Most NGOs also worked to build public awareness and raise consciousness about CL issues (see Annex D for a listing of NGO objectives).

Because the first two RFP rounds yielded relatively few proposals supporting the other two EI goals—institutions/policies and sustainability—WI designed the third RFP to highlight these neglected areas. As a result, more NGOs submitted proposals targeting policy and, in the end, six projects in LA addressed policy issues in some way. No NGO selected sustainability as a principal objective, though most addressed it as a cross-cutting theme.

Since all projects in LA (except PROCESO) focused on at least two EI goals, NGOs reflected a more holistic approach under CIRCLE. This approach was a good step toward the midterm evaluation (MTE) recommendation "[to] fund programs that link the goals of strengthening educational systems, increasing public awareness, and strengthening national institutions and policy. The synergies that ILAB and implementing partners can obtain from linking these three goals in one activity seem optimal."

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[6] Available at http://www.cebiae.edu.bo.

2. *Is the project on track in terms of meeting its stated purpose and outputs in the project document? If not, what seem to be the factors contributing to delays?*

With the exception of one indicator, CIRCLE activities in the LA region are on track to meet or exceed the stated outputs in the WI project's logical framework (i.e., logframe). Table 2 summarizes the region-specific achievement of indicators through March 2007, and detailed information on student completion and withdrawal/prevention by subcontract may be referenced at Annex E.

Table 2: Achievement of Latin America Region, per CIRCLE Logframe[1]

Overall Winrock Indicators	Project Target Worldwide	Project Actual Latin America Region
1. Existence of a final document detailing replicable community-based educational innovations, or "best practices"	1	To date, 10 BPs have been evaluated (with 3 in the final stages of completion). The remaining 4 BP packets are ongoing.
2. Number of Spotlight Stories	**CIRCLE I—39** **CIRCLE II—39**	**CIRCLE I Actual—9** **CIRCLE II Actual—2** **CIRCLE II In Progress—4**
3a. Percent of children (at-risk of CL) in subcontract funded activities in target communities, educated[2]	N/A	110% (87.7%)
3b. Percent of subcontracted NGOs in subcontracted funded activities meeting targets for children educated[3]	70%	100% (81.8%)
4. Percent of overall subcontracts that are implemented as planned (inclusive of extensions)[4]	90%	84.6%
5. Percent of community-based organizations with increased capacity to manage and report on educational innovations	80%	92.8%
6. Number of subcontracts awarded	N/A	16 subcontracts and 2 UACs

[1] Information and data provided by Winrock regional office in Brazil.

[2] Percentage of children targeted who received direct services and educated (enrolled) with projects completed. Number in parentheses is lower if factoring in the two subcontracts that were terminated.

[3] Percentage of NGOs completing projects based on targets for children educated (enrolled) with direct services (since the *number* of students couldn't be predicted in advance of NGO proposals). Number in parentheses is lower if factoring in the two subcontracts that were terminated.

[4] Eleven out of 13 NGOs (including first UAC). Four subcontracts and one UAC were still ongoing in March 2007.

Only Indicator 4 will fall slightly short of the target, with 16 of 18 subcontracts (88.9%) to be implemented as planned by the end of CIRCLE II. Two NGOs were terminated: *Instituto de Capacitação Comunitária* (ICC) (Round 1 funding) was canceled in September 2004 because of a lack of compliance with local labor laws; and *Servicios Integrales para el Desarrollo* (SIDES) (Round 2) was not granted an extension in 2005 to complete activities because of a poor implementation track record.

It is important to note that all other NGOs (with CENDHEC and OA still ongoing) providing direct services met at least 100% of their student completion targets, and in some cases substantially exceeded them (e.g., *Programa de Apoyo para la Salud Materno Infantil y para la Salud de Otros Grupos de Riesgo* [PAMI] with 128%, *Sumando* with 125%, and *Primeiro de Maio* with 118%). In addition, 13 of 14 NGOs demonstrated increased reporting capacity during the life of project (reporting criteria listed in Section 5.2, question 8).

Although there were no specific regional targets set for the production of Spotlight Stories, the total of 15 in LA (19.2% of the 78 worldwide) is in line with the region's share of subcontracts (16% of the total). With regard to BP evaluations, 10 have been completed or are nearly complete, with four remaining. BP packets have been delayed in some cases, but will still be finished within the larger project timeframe.

> 3. *Were the project purpose and outputs realistic?*

The overall project purpose and outputs have proven to be realistic for the LA region. Had the two terminated NGOs performed as expected, it is likely that achievement of Indicator 3a would have exceeded 100%, and indicators 3b and 4 would have been 100%.

Given the fundamental importance of the final BP document as a product of CIRCLE, it would have been helpful to incorporate intermediary benchmarks to measure progress over the life of project. Such indicators would have clarified the steps in the production process and given project staff around the world a better sense of progress along the way, as well as their role within it. In the same vein, it would have been useful to require Regional Managers (RMs) to specifically report against overall WI indicators semiannually so that they felt more of a sense of ownership of the project logframe.

> 4. *Is the project able to accurately measure results in terms of USDOL common indicators (withdrawal, prevention, completion)? If not, why not?*

When CIRCLE I was initially awarded in 2002, WI was required to report against enrollment, persistence, transition, and completion indicators for the EI goal of direct educational services. In September 2005, WI began including its own indicator data for the other EI goals (i.e., public awareness, institutions/policies, and sustainability). This information—later referred to as the "non-GPRA indicators"—was rolled up from individual NGO partners' logframes to present a more complete reflection of their activities and accomplishments. The table could not have been developed by WI in advance since the various NGO indicators were unknown until after proposals were selected.

In 2005, USDOL informed WI that reporting against "common indicators" was being instituted under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). Definitions of those indicators are provided below to orient the reader. Early in 2006, USDOL requested disaggregation of student cohorts according to their status as withdrawn or prevented from child labor. The concept of "transition" was also removed from project reporting in 2006, and WI was instructed to include it under completion.

Table 3: Definitions of USDOL Common Indicators

Indicators	Definition
Withdrawn	Refers to those children that were found to be working and no longer work as a result of a project intervention. This category also includes those children that were engaged in exploitive/hazardous (see definition) work and as a result of a project intervention now work shorter hours under safer conditions. In both cases, in order to be considered as beneficiaries of the project/program under this category, children working in exploitive child labor must no longer be working and be benefiting or have benefited from educational or training opportunities, as defined, provided by the project.
Prevented	This refers to children that are either siblings of (ex-) working children or those children not yet working but considered to be at "high-risk" of engaging in exploitive work. In order to be considered as "prevented" these children must benefit (or have benefited) from educational or training opportunities, as defined, provided by the project.
Retention	The percentage of children withdrawn/prevented through a USDOL-supported educational program(s) who continue in the program (i.e. to subsequent years, periods and/or levels of the program or who stay in the program even if they are not promoted).
Completion	The percentage of children withdrawn/prevented through a USDOL-supported program that complete the program(s).

* Source: U.S. Department of Labor Glossary of Child Labor and Education Terms, included in Winrock Regional Launch Meeting manual.

Because this change in indicator guidance occurred well after Round 2 awards were made in mid-2005, none of those NGOs set withdrawn/prevented (W/P) targets (except *Fundación Junto con los Niños* [JUCONI], which did so of its own volition). The four that had enough time left under their projects (PAMI, *Fundación Comunitaria Centro de Información y Recursos para el Desarrollo* [CIRD], *Sumando*, and *Primeiro de Maio*) measured actual W/P based on the definitions. However, since they had not received W/P indicator training at the Round 2 regional launch meeting, their understanding was somewhat muddied. Round 3 NGOs were thus the only ones to officially set targets—CR (60 prevented), CENDHEC (40 prevented), and OA (49 withdrawn/211 prevented)—*and* receive RLM guidance. The quality of their data and reporting is clearly better as a result.

In the LA region to date, there have been 242 children withdrawn and 670 prevented from child labor, with 1,646 children completing CIRCLE programs. This data differ somewhat from that previously reported by WI in its technical progress reports (TPRs), primarily because several NGO reporting errors were discovered and resolved during this evaluation. In the evaluator's opinion, these figures are the most accurate available. For detailed data by NGO, please refer to Annex E.

A number of common indicator-related issues have been a source of confusion within the project, including—

- Because retention only factors in children who have been W/P, there is no mechanism to count those who are attending an education program but have not *yet* been W/P.

- According to USDOL's definition of educational programs and services,[7] beneficiary students are only counted toward mainstreaming and formal school enrollment *"after*

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[7] Included in USDOL's TPR template under the definition of withdrawal and prevention, clause 1.4.

they have received assistance from the project to enable them to enroll in such programs. *Assistance provided by the project could include one or more of the following services: the provision of school meals, uniforms, books, school supplies/materials, tuition and transportation vouchers, or other types of incentives that enable the child to be enrolled in an education program."* [emphasis added]. This has led some NGOs to specifically buy some type of small incentive so that students are eligible to be counted.

- What counts as *completion*—when a student finishes a school year? When the NGO subcontract ends?

- Do student beneficiaries still count under the project if they reach age 18 before the subcontract ends?

- How should students who continue to work a few hours outside of school (e.g., on the weekends) be classified?

It is also important to note the difficulty in monitoring certain types of child labor (e.g., domestic work and agriculture) and illicit activities (e.g., prostitution) according to the indicator definitions. While they are theoretically elaborated well, the definitions seem not to work as well in the field, as the reality of child labor is dynamic and complex. Since other EI evaluations of other projects (e.g., *Educar*) and in other countries have conveyed similar confusion, these performance measurement issues clearly have not been sufficiently addressed by USDOL.

5. *Can increased educational quality be measured within the project framework? What has been its impact, if any, on project common indicators (W/P of children from child labor [CL])?*

Of the 16 subcontracts in Latin America, 14 were awarded for a period of one year or less. As the roots of poor educational quality are broad and deep, it is not feasible to expect projects to effect measurable quality improvements in a matter of months.

That being said, much of the work under CIRCLE has been successful in planting the seeds of interventions that *could* impact quality indicators over time, under favorable conditions. Examples include the tutoring and academic support services provided by *Primeiro de Maio*, *Asociación Mujer Família* and OA; efforts by PROCESO, *Instituto Salud y Trabajo* (ISAT), and CEBIAE to redesign curricula and introduce creative methodologies that are better suited to the learning needs of child laborers and at-risk youth; and CENDHEC's training/sensitization of PETI educators that run after-school programs.

The indicators that WI has been reporting against (i.e., teachers trained, improved curriculum modules developed, Parent-Teacher Associations—PTAs—formed, and infrastructure improved) reflect some of the essential building blocks in this process, but there is not *necessarily* a correlation between the interventions and improved quality. Trained teachers must apply new methodologies, parents must exercise school leadership, new classrooms must be equipped and staffed, etc. Advances in these areas will need to occur long after the CIRCLE project ends.

6. *How has the project's design fit into overall government programs to combat child labor and provide education for all?*

As outlined, the enabling environment for CIRCLE activities in Brazil has been quite favorable.[8]

> Brazil joined IPEC in 1992 as one of the original six participating countries. The next decade saw impressive developments as Brazil reached a threshold in the fight against child labor. Among the factors explaining the decrease in the CL incidence from the mid-1990s is the high level of social mobilization in Brazil.
>
> What really made the difference was the establishment of a unique and innovative structure in late 1994, the National Forum for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor—set up as a permanent environment around which social actors could build consensus and discuss policies and issues related to CL and youth employment.
>
> In February 2006, compulsory education was extended to nine years. An important breakthrough began to occur from the mid-1990s in primary school enrolments in the poorest regions, including the Northeast. This was made possible by a strong public policy commitment to ensure that every child is in school.
>
> The *Bolsa Familia* program provides cash support to families on the condition that children attend school. The **Program for the Eradication of Child Labor (PETI)** specifically targets working children. In addition to cash incentives, it provides educational and after-school support. Established in 1996, it now reaches over 1 million children aged 9 to 15.
>
> —Excerpt from May 4, 2006, ILO Press Release

However, a 2005 National Household survey suggests a reversal of the trend, with a 10.3% increase in child labor (ages 5 to 14) since 2004. At 15.9%, the Northeast had the highest rate of child and adolescent labor (ages 5 to 17).[9] These data highlight the need for continued action and attention to CL issues in Brazil.

Two of the three NGOs visited work closely with PETI, the government's flagship child labor program. *Primeiro de Maio* was selected as an after-school program provider in 2002 when Municipal PETI decided to outsource this work to NGOs. This partnership is critical to program sustainability since PETI finances teacher salaries, education materials, and food. Comments by the PETI Coordinator included "The quality of pedagogy here is very good, I have seen a huge improvement in *Primeiro de Maio* over the years… If we had other organizations like them, we would have 50% less street kids." In Recife, PETI interns are responsible for running after-school programs though they have little or no preparation to do so. Through CIRCLE, CENDHEC is training them on child labor issues and appropriate educational approaches for this at-risk population.

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[8] Another important piece of the legal framework is the Statute on Children and Adolescents (ECA), enacted in July 1990. Although the Statute articulates that child labor and the right to education are incompatible, there is widespread lack of knowledge about ECA and its legal protections. Part of the CIRCLE work in Brazil is raising awareness about the rights and responsibilities contained therein.

[9] More information available at http://pfdc.pgr.mpf.gov.br/clipping/maio-2007/brasil-falha-no-combate-ao-trabalho-infantil/ and http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/populacao/trabalhoerendimento/pnad2005/.

The situation in Bolivia is quite grave as the country has both the highest rate of poverty (65 to 70%) and child labor (at least 20%) in the region. Although the General Labor Law prohibits children under 14 from working, there are currently between 800,000 and 1 million child laborers. The Bolivian Code for Boys, Girls, and Adolescents provides legal protection on paper, but is not vigorously enforced. There is also a National Plan on the Progressive Eradication of Child Labor 2000–2010. CEBIAE is one of only two CIRCLE projects in the region to focus primarily on public policies—both the formulation of better policies affecting youth writ large (and child laborers as a key target population) and the application and enforcement of existing laws/policies, starting at the local level.

7. *What other major design/implementation issues should be brought to the attention of the implementing organization and USDOL?*

The most significant CIRCLE issue in Latin America has been the complexity of managing all project elements in three languages—English, Spanish, and Portuguese. This complexity is multifaceted:

- Because all USDOL project documents (e.g., indicators, GPRA information, CL definitions, semester report format) are provided in English, each EI grantee is responsible for translating them individually. As a result, the subtleties in the original language get lost and ambiguities magnified in Spanish/Portuguese. This makes it even more challenging for NGOs to accurately follow the guidance.

- Neither of the two fulltime CIRCLE staff members at HQ speaks Spanish or Portuguese, so they are unable to read original reports/materials from NGOs in Latin America.

- Despite the high translation costs and staff burden involved, there was no separate line item in WI's budget for the LA regional office. Rather, translation was charged from office supplies and services.

- These issues greatly increased the regional launch meeting (RLM) budgets given the need for simultaneous translation in three languages in the first two rounds, and for Spanish/Portuguese in the third. Language barriers also impeded the communication between NGO and WI HQ representatives, especially during the first two RLMs.

- It has been difficult for the regional office to find good translators who are also knowledgeable about CL issues and CIRCLE content, so extensive editing of written translations is usually required. This and other extra translation work is done by the Deputy RM, only 70% of whose time is currently dedicated to CIRCLE.

- It is challenging for WI staff in HQ and other regional offices to serve as BP reviewers of projects, since many key documents (e.g., bimonthly reports) are only written in Spanish/Portuguese, thus requiring translation. The other side of the coin is that WI site visit reports must be written in English, which precludes native Spanish/Portuguese-speaking BP reviewers from reading them.

- Although many items on the CIRCLE website (e.g., RFPs, newsletters, some Spotlight Stories) are downloadable in Spanish/Portuguese, few NGOs even know enough English to be able to navigate the site and take advantage of the resources. The site is therefore of relatively limited utility in the region as a tool for horizontal learning and replication of other countries' experiences.

To address these issues, Winrock HQ CIRCLE project capacity in Spanish was enhanced through the HQ CIRCLE part-time administrative assistant who helped significantly with translations and reading of documents. In addition, the former and current Managing Directors/Vice President of the unit are fluent in Spanish and contributed to both the BP reviews and proposal reviews. The current unit Vice President (since 2005) is also fluent in Portuguese and has contributed to reviewing BPs and proposals. CIRCLE HQ also had the benefit of an intern fluent in Spanish. The former Managing Director and current group VP each attended an RLM in Latin America.

8. Was the community-based approach successful?

See response in Section 5.2, question 4.

9. Did the project result in sufficient innovation?

As defined by WI in its BP guidance:

"Innovative *under CIRCLE means an approach to reducing CL through education that is unique or new in its context, and is of potentially wider interest and application. An intervention does not necessarily need to be brand new or original to be innovative. An innovative intervention might be a change in practice that produced unexpectedly positive results, for example, or an approach grounded in local tradition that reduces the number of children involved in the worst forms of child labor. A potential best practice may (1) be unique in its context, (2) have reached a new (i.e., previously unserved) target group or geographic area with services to prevent or stop child labor, or (3) had unexpected success or unexpectedly positive results."*

In the absence of a standard or definition of sufficient innovation, it is impossible for the evaluator to assess whether this was achieved in LA. However, based on the BP reviews of 10 NGO projects to date as well as the evaluation visits to six projects, it is clear that all of them have developed innovative elements, approaches, activities, methodologies, strategies, etc. Key examples of these innovations are listed in Table 3.

> "In the context of the CIRCLE project, a best practice is an aspect of a project that has been effective in preventing or reducing child labor and is an inspiration to others."

Table 3: Innovations and Best Practices Developed Under CIRCLE

Country	NGO	Examples
Bolivia	CEBIAE	Creation of an interinstitutional network dedicated to formulating public policies related to youth and enforcing existing laws/policies Revision of school curriculum to be more responsive to needs of child laborers and at-risk youth Campaign to obtain birth certificates and *cédulas* for youth
Bolivia	PROCESO	The use of working children to develop the "new" educational approach Design and production of a demonstrative educational IT package Social and educational needs assessment of child laborers
Bolivia	Obispo Anaya	Youth groups as leaders in raising awareness about ecology and child labor Behavioral changes in beneficiaries as a result of project intervention on raising awareness about the hazards of garbage collection Development of key partnerships (university, hospital, and civil society)
Brazil	Casa Renascer	The use of therapeutic groups Workshops with adolescents to develop empathy Uniting institutional methodologies for dealing with adolescent victims of sexual violence that used to be worked in isolation, and applying them to community and school
Brazil	CENDHEC	Development/monitoring of public policy for prevention/eradication of CL Involvement of project beneficiaries in development and monitoring of policy Group of youth multipliers Strengthening of PETI (national public policy) system
Brazil	Primeiro de Maio	*Cluberê* as a model of a nonformal educational intervention Addressing and finding solutions for family and community violence Utilization of Paulo Freire's principles with children and adolescents Use of psychodrama Teachers trained to work with "problem students"
Ecuador	JUCONI	Project monitoring methodology Personalized family-based approach that addresses patterns of violence as key to combating child labor Alliances between teachers and school to ensure child's educational success Addressing family/community violence as critical component to reducing CL Holistic and participatory approach
Guatemala	CEIPA	Overall project Children/youth empowerment Family visits/monitoring visits Awareness-building Street education

Country	NGO	Examples
Guatemala	PAMI	Crafting local public policies with Commission for Women, Children, and Adolescents Comprehensive approach to children's welfare, including the provision of scholarships Vocational workshops (e.g., computers)
Nicaragua	Dos Generaciones	Action via grassroots community work and pressure for state accountability Community participation and organization Broaden capacity of community actors to advocate for the rights of children and reinforce those rights, identification of community advisors Vocational training for adolescents linked to WFCL Microenterprise promotion with support of private companies
Paraguay	CIRD	Community involvement (parents and tutors) Strong partnerships Hygiene and dental care Link with transportation companies Holistic assistance to project beneficiaries
Paraguay	Sumando	Long-distance learning Peer learning Follow-up and awareness-raising with employers to guarantee application of law and the participation of beneficiaries in educational activities Identification and follow-up of beneficiaries needing more assistance/care
Peru	AMF	Watch groups Monitoring employers Youth group—*grupo impulsor* Overall coordination/integration
Peru	ISAT	Development of education models Awareness-raising campaigns Network of child promoters

10. Is there any other foreseeable mechanism for achieving innovation?

When USDOL/ILAB awarded CIRCLE I in 2002, it was the office's first procurement. Though it would have been ideal to structure NGO projects as grants, USDOL does not have subgrant authority from Congress.[10] As a result of the requirement to issue subcontracts, WI has had to be

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[10] "It is improper for nongovernmental entities that receive grant funds from the [United States Government] USG to sub-grant any of these funds where there is not specific congressional authority to do so. USDOL does not have the specific authority in its congressional appropriation to allow sub-grants under its cooperative agreements. Sub-granting must not be included in an applicant's budget, although subcontracting may be." Available at http://www.dol.gov/ILAB/faq/faq36.htm.

more formal and structured about deliverables and other elements of NGO project management—taking away some of the intent and flexibility originally envisioned by ILAB.

With regard to UACs being an effective mechanism to achieve innovation, the sample size of two in Latin America is insufficient to draw any conclusions.

> *11. Assess the compilation of the Best Practices compendium. How is it progressing and how could it be improved?*

To identify BPs from global CIRCLE projects and distills key information from this vast undertaking, WI developed a methodology that goes well beyond an internal survey of "what works" to more of a peer review. Key elements of the approach include—

- An initial identification stage by NGOs who present Emerging GPs and Spotlight Stories in their semi-annual technical reports.

- BP review teams consist of WI headquarters (HQ)/regional office staff and volunteer outside evaluators (i.e., regional CL and education experts). In LA there are two internal and two external individuals on each team, with some outside evaluators analyzing more than one project. For the four remaining NGOs, there will be three to four external evaluators each.

- Upon completion of each subcontract, regional managers (RMs) compile an Introduction and List of Materials, Vital Information Summary and Matrix, and report pack with the most important reports and information written by the NGO, WI site visit reports, and any published Spotlight Stories. The Evaluation Packet is completed with the BP Evaluation Methodology and BP Evaluation Sheet. These instruments help guide reviewers and systematize the process across regions.

- Reviewers evaluate each project and/or intervention as potential BPs with a score of 1 (unsuccessful), 2 (good), or 3 (very successful) based on six criteria: Effectiveness, Innovation, Educational/Vocational Relevance, Stakeholder Involvement, Replicability, and Sustainability. Reviewers also identify lessons learned under the project.

- Reviewers are generally asked to complete their work in a two-week period, with flexibility, since it takes an average of 10–12 hours (with time reported as WI match) to read all project documentation and complete the BP analysis. This is a challenging task for someone unfamiliar with a project and with limited time availability.

- Once reviews are completed, RMs compile all information in a Post-Evaluation Summary Sheet listing the BPs identified, number of votes for each, and reviewer comments. The table also identifies the BPs identified by RMs, and their vote counts more than the other reviewers since they know the projects best.

- An external consultant was hired in early 2007 to compile an initial draft of the BP Handbook, including a report of the CIRCLE project itself as a BP. WI is hoping to have the full draft finished by September 2007 to coincide with the end of CIRCLE I, though that timeframe may be overly ambitious.

According to WI regional staff, there was more focus on innovation and Spotlight Stories early in CIRCLE—reflected by the fact that BPs were not really emphasized with Round 1 grantees. Although the BP methodology was still under development at the time of Round 2 awards, the whole process has been more clear to NGOs from Rounds 2 and 3. WI has emphasized continually the importance of good reporting since it is the principal source of information leading to BP identification. As a result, there has been clear improvement in Round 3 reporting. Site visits have also been important since they allow in-depth discussion with NGOs. In the words of regional staff, *"We're a mirror to them but we have both an inside and outside perspective with fresh eyes… Sometimes they don't even recognize it's a BP, they're so involved that they don't realize."*

Feedback from BP reviewers was generally positive and they found the experience to be an interesting one. They thought the definitions of the six criteria were clear and the examples helpful. They said the site visit reports and Spotlight Stories were helpful in determining BPs and "putting life" into reports since it is difficult to evaluate something you cannot see. They had no problem with the volunteer aspect of the work, and praised WI for bringing many different people with different perspectives and experience together for the peer review.

Among challenges, reviewers noted the time commitment required, extensive documentation to review, unclear/unsubstantiated reporting and indicator data from NGOs, weak documentation of the action-result correlation, difficulty in scoring certain project areas and evaluation criteria (e.g., sustainability), and lack of personal contact with NGO stakeholders (e.g., through a site visit or phone interview).

When queried about the value added of the CIRCLE Handbook, BP reviewers, the external BP consultant, and Stakeholder Meeting, participants provided valuable feedback for both WI and USDOL:

- The Handbook must be translated into Spanish and Portuguese, this is non-negotiable.

- Need to define *for what* and *for whom*. Make sure the language is appropriate for targeted audience, and focus on the needs and expectations of the user.

- "Brazil is a very oral culture so I doubt many people will read the manual. It would be useful to also have a video."

- Need to show/illustrate how to do things with concrete cases and examples. Make it interactive and use more of a didactic style. Make it practical and not too long, with pictures.

- Winrock's approach is much more practical and accessible, much more down to earth.

- "I have a big problem with the term 'best practice.' You're really providing examples of models that have worked in a particular environment and with a particular group—but who defines what's best?"

- Do not mix targeted publics—you cannot write the same handbook for Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) designing projects and NGOs implementing at the community level.

- It is important to contextualize the elements of what makes certain things work. Also clarify the beliefs, principles, and concepts behind the context.

- "The process of BP identification only makes sense if it is useful—first to the NGO that is developing the practice, and second if it is known by other NGOs that are working to reduce child labor."

- Do not forget about public-sector officials when disseminating the Handbook.

- Need to get ownership from NGOs so they will use—for example, return the draft Handbook to partners to get more detail and feedback. Important to reflect the beneficiaries' voice in their own way, how the project mattered to them.

- "Remember good practices are meant to stimulate/provoke (*provocar*), not copy—everyone wants to put their own stamp on their work."

- There should be statements from the target audience and their own evaluation of the process, thus promoting their own reflection about what was achieved or not.

- Have the NGOs involved now in narrowing down the BP themes—which ones are they most interested in and need help with?

- "There's a plethora of these things out there, but to what extent do people really read them? There's only a few documents out there that I've seen that are really useful."

With regard to the last bullet, there are two existing GP documents in Spanish that may be beneficial for WI and USDOL to review (e.g., to identify gaps in information). They were published by the ILO[11] and *Primero Aprendo*,[12] the EI regional project in Central America.

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[11] Available at http://www.oit.org.pe/ipec/documentos/buenas_practicas_ final_12.01.2006.pdf.
[12] Available at http://www.primeroaprendo.org/practicas.

5.1.2   Conclusions

- Except for one indicator, CIRCLE is on track to fulfill all of its project outputs in the LA region and has been successful in identifying a variety of innovations that are helping to prevent and reduce CL through education.

- There has been good coverage in LA of three of the four EI objectives, with the exception of sustainability as a primary/secondary NGO subcontract objective.

- The overall CIRCLE logframe and WI indicators were viewed more as an HQ exercise, with relatively little ownership from regional offices that remained more involved with tracking NGOs.

- The USDOL common indicators have been a large source of uncertainty and confusion in the region—both for WI and NGO staff.

- The CIRCLE project design is generally relevant and appropriate, but a large gap is that it fails to address the level and root causes of poverty in target communities—critical factors linked to child labor. Given the limited funding and timelines, as well as the emphasis on education, it was not feasible to address factors tied to structural inequities and poverty. However, it is noteworthy that several CIRCLE NGOs have addressed aspects of poverty reduction in creative ways in LA (e.g., family savings plans, skills training, and changing attitudes regarding child labor and education). There are many ways to enhance poverty reduction that could be scaled up as a best practice on a longer term basis through income generation, microfinance partnerships, livelihoods development, policy reforms, and capacity building.

- Managing project activities in three languages presented a level of complexity that was underestimated by WI in its budget planning and design.

5.1.3   Recommendations

- In the future, USDOL might want to make sustainability a cross-cutting theme that grantees are required to address in all subprojects (e.g., through partnerships, sustainability plans/indicators) rather than a goal per se.

- For EI grantees working in LA, it is critical that USDOL translate all indicators (e.g., definitions, guidance, reporting requirements, etc.) into Spanish and Portuguese in an effort to definitively systematize and standardize information, minimize differences in interpretation, and reduce confusion about what is needed.

- Although microcredit funds are an unallowable activity under USDOL cooperative agreements, future grantees should be encouraged to explore other approaches to reducing family poverty (e.g., technical skills training and job placement assistance for parents) since it is one of the key push factors toward child labor. These complementary

activities could be provided through creative project partnerships and were included in the RLM module on sustainability.

- While the methodology to identify best practices has been very participatory with outside peer reviewers, the NGOs themselves have not been directly involved in the process. This lack of involvement should be remedied to the extent possible before final preparation of the Handbook.[13]

- For the remaining projects to be reviewed in LA (i.e., OA, CENDHEC, CEBIAE), try to have at least one of the external BP reviewers personally visit each project.

- Now that the BP review process has yielded a comprehensive list of successful interventions—only a fraction of which can be included in the Handbook—WI should involve its CIRCLE partners in the process of identifying those of most interest to NGOs for their future programming. NGOs should also be included in a validation/ constructive criticism of the BP draft, especially since they have not been directly involved in the process to date.

- Once the BP Compendium is finalized, regional or subregional dissemination conferences should be held to share the document with donor, governmental, and nongovernmental stakeholders working on child labor issues. It should be translated into both Spanish and Portuguese to maximize its utility throughout Latin America. It should also be posted on the CIRCLE website with links to downloadable reference materials (e.g., school curriculum, CL training materials) to maximize its utility to practitioners.

5.2   SUBCONTRACT DESIGN/IMPLEMENTATION

5.2.1   Findings

1. Are the projects in the region on track in terms of meeting stated outputs in their proposals? If not, what seem to be the factors contributing to delays?

As discussed in detail in Section 5.1, NGO subcontracts in LA have met between 100 and 128% of their student completion targets under CIRCLE (see Annex E).

In terms of W/P, only four NGOs set W/P targets in their logframes—JUCONI voluntarily in Round 2, and CR, CENDHEC, and OA in Round 3 (after the GPRA common indicator was instituted in early 2006). Of the completed projects, JUCONI met 100% of its W/P targets and CR met 85% of its prevention target. Of the ongoing projects, CENDHEC and OA are essentially meeting 100% of their prevention targets, and OA is meeting 20.4% of its withdrawal target (10 of 49 students). Since that project runs until October 2007, the number should rise over the coming months but will not necessarily reach the final target.

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[13] Originally it was considered a kind of competitive process so NGOs were not included as the "peers." Peer review in this context meant outside referees. At the suggestion of the evaluators, Winrock has started to engage the NGOs in the process of reviewing and even visiting each others' projects to gather more details for the BPs.

Of the six subcontracts visited for the evaluation, most were on track to meet their proposed outputs. One NGO that was overly ambitious in its logframe was CEBIAE. Given its under-estimation of the time and effort involved in creating and consolidating the interinstitutional network, the proposed new public policies will likely be presented to authorities soon after CIRCLE ends in July. In addition, the redesigned curriculum should be completed but not validated in schools by July. That validation work with teachers will continue after the completion of CIRCLE.

2. *Were subcontract purpose and outputs realistic?*

Although both USDOL and WI provided good sample logframes on their websites[14] and WI included logframe training in the RLMs, most NGOs in LA have developed fairly complex instruments that confuse process indicators (e.g., numbers of trainings, school infrastructure delivered), impact indicators, and outputs. There also tends to be a high number of indicators measuring *everything* rather than a more limited number of meaningful project elements (e.g., PROCESO had 12 for a six-month, US$10,000 subcontract). This confusion reflected the fact that many NGOs were not familiar with the logframe methodology and believed the more detail, the better. In retrospect, perhaps more in-depth training and support by WI was needed.

Notwithstanding the confusion in some cases between outputs, activities, and indicators, NGOs by and large accomplished what they had set out to do in their proposals (with the exception of the two subcontracts that were terminated).

3. *Are subcontractors able to accurately measure results in terms of USDOL indicators?*

This information was largely addressed in Section 5.1, question 4.

Of the six NGOs visited, all expressed some level of confusion related to USDOL indicators but *Primeiro de Maio* was, by far, the most confused and frustrated. Although they had already been through *many* occasions of edits and clarifications with WI staff, they initially reported all 354 participants as withdrawn—evidence of a lack of understanding of the most basic definitions. They also believed erroneously that because street children (i.e., those exposed to drugs, crime, and other forms of violence) are often worse off than those who are working, they should be counted as withdrawn and not prevented. As mentioned above, this confusion was more understandable with Round 2 NGOs since they had not received RLM training.

In terms of continual monitoring of W/P youth to ensure they were not working, some NGOs did a better job than others. The ideal is for NGOs to work closely with teachers and parents to stay on top of students' status, however staffing constraints often make frequent home visits impossible. In addition, students can be very secretive about their activities when they know they should not be working.

In sum, the reliability of the indicator data provided by NGOs probably ranges from excellent to questionable.

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[14] Logframes available at: www.dol.gov/ILAB/grants/newlogframe.pdf and http://circle.winrock.org.

4. *Was the community-based approach successful in the region? How did projects meet challenges through community participation, ownership, and child labor monitoring interventions?*

Community-based is a term that must be contextualized to each of the three CIRCLE regions. In Latin America, it does not necessarily mean remote rural areas far from the capital. In fact, six of the NGOs (CEBIAE, CIRD, *Dos Generaciones*, ISAT, PAMI, *Sumando*) have their headquarters in capital cities and also implement activities there. Of the NGOs in LA, ISAT did the most remote work and *Dos Generaciones* had the most national orientation. Those with stronger community ties were AMF, CR, ISAT, JUCONI, OA, and *Primeiro de Maio*. Those who worked with somewhat looser community ties were CEBIAE, CENDHEC, CIRD, PAMI, PROCESO, and *Sumando*.

It is important to note that even when CIRCLE NGOs work in cities (e.g., *Primeiro de Maio* in Salvador, OA in Cochabamba), they target the most needy subzones where poverty, child labor, crime, violence, drugs, prostitution, and other socioeconomic ills run rampant. Therefore these are not grassroots organizations per se, but they are doing community-based work where it is urgently needed. The evaluator had some exposure to more grassroots community-based organizations (CBOs) during her visits, and it was clear that they did not have the level of experience, control, capacity, maturity, or technical experience that is required of CIRCLE partners to operate relatively independently.

The strongest example of integral community participation is *Primeiro de Maio*. When its first CIRCLE proposal was rejected in 2004, the larger community—not just the NGO staff—met to see how the proposal could be improved. In this and other CIRCLE communities visited, there seemed to be a good understanding of the importance of education and the negative effects of exploitive CL as a result of NGOs' work.

According to the current *Primeiro de Maio* board of directors—

"We work intensively with parents to raise their awareness [about child labor]… We use simple language to change their attitudes and help them realize the value of education. If the parents don't comply, we look for legal means with partners. Anybody in the neighborhood can intervene when they see children working or exploited; we're here 24 hours a day."

5. *Assess the strategy used to publicize funding opportunities and to reach out to local NGOs in target countries. Did RFPs truly reach remote, local NGOs capable of implementing project activities? Were RFP dissemination techniques appropriate?*

The LA office used a variety of mechanisms to publicize the three rounds of RFPs. The RM and Deputy started by making contacts with people in the region, strategizing about dissemination ideas, and getting broad recommendations about interested organizations. Once the foundation was laid, the office publicized RFPs through radio, newspaper ads, word-of-mouth publicity, electronic dissemination to WI's NGO database of 675 NGOs and to various listservs (e.g., Child Rights Information Network), the Global March Against Child Labor, distribution to ILO networks, and a notice in the ILO regional newsletter from Peru. To avoid an unfair advantage for Brazilian NGOs, extra mailing time was granted to Central American NGOs. Per regional

staff, *"We disseminated more each successive round, which corresponded with our maturity and expanded network. We now know more professionals and have contact with many more people."*

The issue of reaching remote NGOs was discussed above under bullet 4. Reaching truly grassroots NGOs was not the office's primary intention given the need for organizations to have a minimum standard of institutional capacity and experience to qualify for CIRCLE.

> 6. *Do the communities benefiting from the project feel that CIRCLE is meeting a previously unmet need in a new way?*

At all of the sites visited, community members—including parents, teachers, and project partners—recognized the contribution of CIRCLE in meeting important needs. One participant noted: *"In the past, many parents stayed at home not working and sent their kids out to get income. Now we work intensively with parents to sensitize them about child labor and to increase the self-esteem of mothers…Child labor has gone down in the last two years and the community is working together to combat [it]; we report kids we see working."*

Community members recognize and appreciate the improved formal and nonformal education services being offered under CIRCLE—including the teaching methodologies, redesigned curricula, and new educational materials that are more responsive to the needs and challenges of child laborers and at-risk youth. As one parent said, *"Everything is based on* their *reality now."* Community appreciation is even more pronounced since this segment of the youth population usually "falls through the cracks" of governmental programs and attention, and communities often feel they are left alone to fend for themselves.

One of the downsides to effectively meeting these community needs under short-term CIRCLE projects is the creation of expectations and momentum that often cannot be maintained once funding ends. Some community members expressed frustration that so much work had gone into improving the situation, and now they would be left without support when the conditions were finally favorable to effect real change.

> 7. *How satisfied are the community members with the design and quality of the CIRCLE project's intervention?*

Based on interviews at the six sites, community members were quite satisfied with the CIRCLE activities implemented by NGOs. One project partner in Salvador said, "Society recognizes the work of *Primeiro de Maio* more; they are very respected, and there is 24-hour involvement of the community." A school director in Natal noted, "I really wanted to find a way to reach families/parents in our school because of all the problems with violence, drugs, prostitution, etc… and *Casa Renascer's* help was right on target." Everyone living near the garbage dump in Kara Kara was profuse in their praise of CIRCLE's and OA's help in transforming a poor-quality, multigrade school serving 60 students to a good-quality graded school serving 220. Despite this expansion, they noted a huge unmet demand in the community and a lack of educational supplies from 6th grade on up.

Community members were satisfied with both the formal and nonformal educational services provided as well as the myriad support services offered to students and families. This complementary support included student leadership training, parent/mother groups, health care, environmental training, psychological support and counseling, legal defense and protection services, legalization of identity (i.e., through birth certificates and *cédulas*), and vocational skills training for parents. Many of these support services are provided by governmental and NGO project partners rather than funded by CIRCLE—thus expanding the radius of impact well beyond subcontract resources.

8. *What are the capacity-building elements of the project for subcontractors?*

It is important to note that capacity building (CB) under CIRCLE is generally tied to project management, systems, and procedures rather than an "organizational capacity-building" approach in the broader sense of the term. Although CB was not a specific goal of CIRCLE as designed, WI has worked to strengthen its NGO subcontractors in a variety of areas:

- Technical reporting.

- Financial and administrative systems (e.g., budget development, financial reporting).

- Project design (e.g., logical frameworks).

- Monitoring and evaluation (e.g., creation of M&E plan, student tracking and child labor monitoring systems, indicator reporting).

- Identification of Lessons Learned, Spotlight Stories, and Emerging Good Practices (for further development by Winrock).

- Child labor monitoring and child labor profiling.

- Sustainability (e.g., development of sustainability strategies and indicators).

This CB was multifaceted and occurred primarily through (1) the process of fleshing out proposals between the RFP and subcontract award; (2) the RLMs providing guidance on reporting, procedures, and project management; (3) feedback by WI staff on bimonthly and semiannual reports; (4) phone and e-mail contact with NGOs; and (5) periodic site visits.

The only CB indicator in WI's logframe is "the percent of community-based organizations (CBOs) with increased capacity to manage and report on educational innovations." The criteria used to assess improved reporting are (1) timely and complete reporting based on requirements; (2) reports substantiated by documentation; (3) quality outputs based on activities indicated in the work plan; (4) good analysis of challenges and solutions given; (5) can defend modifications in planned activities; (6) generally less need for technical improvements (based on WI comments); and (7) correct GPRA reporting.

RMs subjectively assess each area for each NGO, and those with a score of at least four are counted as having increased capacity. Only one NGO in LA scored lower than four, and the

Deputy RM said, *"CIRCLE has been such a demanding project that it has built their capacity;*
NGOs are better and...the way they systematized the information helped them organize for the
work they do. They now feel more comfortable with auditing and reporting."

The two principal CB challenges on the part of WI were the distance and geographic distribution
of NGO partners throughout the region, and the limited human and financial resources available
in the LA regional office. Both WI and NGO staff members thought two site visits should be
made to each project, but resource constraints made that impossible.

5.2.2 Additional Findings Concerning Project Design/ Implementation Issues

Reporting Requirements

NGO reporting has been a big issue under CIRCLE. Early in the project, partners were required
to submit monthly technical and financial reports to WI in addition to semiannual reporting
(compiled into TPRs for USDOL). This level of reporting presented quite a burden, diverted
NGO staff time from implementation, and created constant bottlenecks in the process. After the
MTE, the WI requirement was changed to bimonthly reporting, which some NGOs believe is
still too often because little changes in such a short period of time. There also does not seem to
be a strong link between the bimonthly and semester reports, as they have different purposes and
formats.

WI staff members said it was often challenging for NGOs to report TPR information in a clear,
descriptive, and objective way—partly because, "USDOL language in the report format is very
unclear, the terms aren't well-defined, and it's too broad for NGOs to understand."
These uncertainties are compounded for non-native English speakers, especially since the
USDOL language is not always straightforward in English. Even so, the NGO staff members
interviewed generally felt they were able to capture their project achievements in one of the two
reports, and felt more comfortable doing so with practice. They have had an easier time with the
bimonthly reports since the questions are clearer, and appreciate the feedback and comments
provided by the regional office.

5.2.3 Conclusions

- With the exception of two terminations, most NGO projects in LA have met their stated
  outputs and met or exceeded their completion targets. Of the four projects that set W/P
  targets, there was a significant focus on CL prevention (84% of total), which was
  successfully achieved. The overall ratio of students W/P, counting all NGOs, is nearly
  three to one. One of the challenges faced in withdrawing children from work is a lack of
  educational opportunities—often beyond 6th or 7th grade—in poor communities where
  they live.

- The six NGOs visited manifested varying degrees of confusion and frustration with the USDOL common indicators and often made significant errors in categorizing students. This confusion points to the need for clearer guidance and standardized translations of all key EI documents.

- It is difficult to draw any definitive conclusions about differences in project implementation effectiveness between small, medium, and large subcontracts. Based on one proxy for effectiveness—whether NGOs' student completion targets were met—they were all equally effective. It is interesting to note that the two highest percentages (128 and 125%) were achieved under US$10,000 awards, while the next two (118 and 116%) were achieved under awards of US$100,000.

- Within the current evaluation scope of work, it is impossible to analyze the various projects' cost effectiveness.

- Given the particular needs and difficult life circumstances of child laborers and at-risk youth, creative and active methodologies are very effective in stimulating their learning. Psychological support and therapy/counseling is also often needed for students (and sometimes their families) before educational interventions can take root. Many NGOs in LA did an excellent job of providing holistic support services under CIRCLE, often through partnering with various governmental and nongovernmental entities to expand the impact of subcontract resources.

- There was a clear evolution in the RFPs, selection processes, and RLMs between the three global rounds—evidence that WI was attuned to learning lessons and making midcourse corrections to strengthen CIRCLE under its first USDOL agreement. The RLMs were universally appreciated by NGOs both for their training and networking aspects, and were an important part of WI's capacity-building efforts.

- Identifying BPs, Spotlight Stories, and Lessons Learned has been challenging for many NGOs because traditional donor reporting is quite different from CIRCLE. Such reporting tends to emphasize the *what and when* rather than the *why and how* with detail on the richness of the experience, the motivation of stakeholders, the key contextual factors, etc. This emphasis has entailed a change in thinking for most NGOs because they are not accustomed to such an approach. Despite the challenge, most believe this is a valuable skill that will help them better "tell their story" in the future, and many are already applying it more widely within their organizations.

5.2.4   Recommendations

- As recommended in other sections, it is critical for USDOL to provide standard guidance, reporting formats, key documents, etc. in Spanish and Portuguese for EI grantees working in Latin America. The language should be very clear and understandable to avoid confusion and to foster better quality reporting.

- In future projects such as CIRCLE, a specific line item should be budgeted for translation costs—whether the work is handled by outside translators or in-house by a part-time staff person.

- ILAB should consider compiling the training and capacity-building materials produced by various EI grantees and posting them on its website so that future grantees are not required to "reinvent the wheel."

5.3   PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION

5.3.1   Findings

1. What have been the major issues and challenges of initiating partnerships in support of the project at local, national, and/or regional levels?

The location of the Winrock regional office in Salvador represents both a constraint and an opportunity in promoting project partnerships. On the one hand, national networking and advocacy efforts within Brazil are more challenging from the Northeast region since government and policy action tends to be concentrated in the capital city of Brasilia. To address this relative isolation—exacerbated by limited staffing and high transportation costs—WI staff participated in the National Forum of Child Labor and invited national representatives to the RLMs and as regional selection committee (RSC) members. On the other hand, it is helpful to operate from Salvador since the Northeast is the poorest region and all three CIRCLE projects are located there. Given the high level of decentralization in Brazil, it is often more advantageous and practical to foster partnerships with state and municipal bodies.

WI efforts to foster national partnerships in other CIRCLE countries were generally limited to strengthening contacts during site visits. As mentioned below, WI staff members have made a concerted effort to build relationships with ILO representatives in each country (with the exception of Guatemala) and to organize introductory meetings to "open the door" for participating NGOs. Had resources been available under the project, WI would have also invited key actors from other countries to the RLMs to promote further partnerships in the region. Finally, WI staff members have worked to expand the office's database of relevant organizations in other countries.

Partnerships at the local level have generally been developed directly by participating NGOs. Governmental partners include such entities as PETI monitors (Brazil), municipal and depart-mental officials from various Ministries (e.g., Education, Labor, Social/Family Services), mayors' offices, and Commissions for Children and Adolescents (Bolivia). Nongovernmental partners include a variety of NGOs and CBOs, foundations, universities, health facilities, schools, etc. Partnerships with private-sector institutions are still relatively limited in the region.

2. *What have been the major challenges and opportunities, if any, of implementing coordination with ILO-IPEC, other international organizations, and national governments (if applicable)?*

The ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean is located in Peru and there is a country office in Brasilia.[15] According to the Deputy RM, the ILO Regional Office has provided indispensable support in publicizing CIRCLE materials (e.g., RFPs) and disseminating information through its networks. The ILO representative in Brazil attended the RLMs and also served as an RSC member and BP reviewer. He is thus well-apprised of national CIRCLE activities, though less so about the broader regional work. Coordination was particularly strong with ISAT in Peru and CENDHEC in Brazil. Whenever WI staff members do site visits to other countries, they make a concerted effort to establish relationships with ILO officials and to introduce CIRCLE partners. Although ILO-IPEC has funded activities in several CIRCLE countries (e.g., Brazil, Guatemala, Nicaragua) there has been little implementation coordination to date.

There have been other EI projects in Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. Some coordination has occurred with the Educar project in Brazil, which focuses on commercial sexual exploitation and illicit agriculture. Since CIRCLE and Educar share one of the same partners (CENDHEC), project managers made sure not to duplicate efforts. Educar partners also received the CIRCLE RFPs and one of them submitted a proposal in the third round. The Deputy RM also attended a debriefing on EI project results in Bolivia. Finally, USDOL's EI conference in March 2006 was useful in facilitating CIRCLE networking and coordinating grantees from other countries.

There has also been some coordination with other international organizations, including *Terre des Hommes*, which co-funded some of CENDHEC's activities; *Voces Libres* and CCF, collaborating with OA; KNH and Pestalozzi Foundation, supporting the work of PAMI; and *Ágata Esmeralda*, which assists *Primeiro de Maio*.

Implementation challenges relating to national governments were mentioned under bullet 1.

3. *How well have the Regional Selection Committees functioned?*

Volunteer RSC members in Latin America represent NGOs, universities, research centers, ILO-IPEC, government ministries, leadership training schools, children's defense organizations, the Latin American Institute for Human Rights, and the Global March Against Child Labor. Because these individuals are immersed in education and child labor issues, involving them in the CIRCLE selection process created important connections with governmental and nongovernmental entities in the region.

To avoid conflicts of interest, one condition of participating was that RSC members' organizations could not compete in CIRCLE solicitations, which was quite a sacrifice for some and is evidence of their commitment. Moreover, RSC members had to sign a confidentiality agreement since their identity as reviewers was anonymous.

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[15] See their websites for more information: http//www.oit.org.pe, http://www.oitbrasil.org.br, and http://www.oit.org.pe/ipec.

To start the selection process, the Winrock regional office initially filtered all of the proposals received to identify those meeting the minimal eligibility criteria:

- Be a nationally based (not international) NGO registered according to country laws and legislation.

- Demonstrate ability to manage subcontracts in a sound manner (such as a bank account and an experienced accountant).

- Demonstrate technical knowledge, capacity, and relevant experience to address child labor and education issues, and have concrete systems to monitor impact.

- Submit a complete application with a project description that promotes CIRCLE objectives.

- Bring not less than 10% (out of total budget amount) in contribution of matching funds or assets to the project proposed.

A total of 89 proposals were received from El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Peru, and Brazil (43) in Round 1. Less than a third of those met the minimum criteria. In Round 2, there were 147 proposals received from Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, and Brazil (68). Thirty-seven percent of those met the eligibility criteria. Fewer proposals were submitted in Round 3—45 total, 14 from Brazil—partly because newspaper ads were not placed abroad (due to missing the deadline) and partly because the solicitation fell during Carnival, a period of little work activity in LA (especially Brazil). There was marked improvement in the number of proposals (60%) meeting the eligibility criteria.

There was a clear disparity in the number of proposals submitted from Brazil in Rounds 1 and 2—partly reflecting a higher level of national NGO capacity, and partly reflecting the in-country presence of the regional office and its more extensive contacts. In order to ensure a balanced representation among countries, RSC members decided to limit the proportion of awards to Brazilian NGOs. According to the Deputy RM, *"RSC members did a good job and picked the best proposals; they weren't biased by their country. It was also helpful to have members who knew the countries/NGOs since they could provide a reality check."* The RSC also did not base its selection on the number of children NGOs proposed to work with, so smaller cohorts (e.g., JUCONI) were not excluded.

After RSC members reviewed and scored their assigned proposals (two people reviewed each one), CIRCLE staff members sat with each group and selected the best proposals to be presented to the full committee for a plenary discussion and vote. A list of recommendations was then presented to WI HQ for review, and ultimately to USDOL for approval. The Winrock regional office simply provided background information about CIRCLE and facilitated the selection process, but did not have a vote.

Several adjustments and midcourse corrections were made between selection rounds based on experience and lessons learned. These included—

- Changing the list of eligible countries after Round 1 given high levels of interest (removing El Salvador and adding Paraguay, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Mexico).

- Adding a logframe example to the RFP after Round 1, and emphasizing the need for an M&E plan.

- Reordering the list of EI objectives to emphasize work on policies/institutions.

- Explaining and emphasizing the common indicators for direct assistance (W/P, retention, and completion).

- Emphasizing the importance of meeting *all* minimum eligibility criteria, with a special focus on the fact that *even if an organization submits Section I in a language besides English, they MUST submit the Executive Summary, Budget, and Section II (financial questionnaire) in English.*

- Further clarifying/elaborating on the concept of innovation.

- Highlighting the more difficult worldwide competition for large awards.

Existing NGO partners in LA and other regions were encouraged to reapply for funding, but they needed to comply with minimum criteria as stipulated in the Round 3 RFP.[16] Although five NGOs (AMF, CEIPA, ISAT, PAMI, and *Primeiro de Maio*) submitted new proposals, none were selected. One proposal did not meet the minimum eligibility criteria, three did not achieve the minimum RFP criteria listed below, and the fifth was judged technically weaker than another NGO selected in the same funding category. The biggest problem was that many did not propose anything new or different from the previous CIRCLE project.

Challenges in the RSC process included minimizing subjectivity in scoring since people have different standards and interpretations, handling the review of so many proposals in a given time period, and judging/identifying innovative proposals during the selection stage. Round 2 was particularly difficult because there were so many proposals overall and many for the large category, while USDOL preferred to issue smaller awards. As a result, many NGOs had to find a way to cut down their original budgets from US$100,000 or more to only US$10,000, which caused a great deal of frustration and difficulty for the NGOs.

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[16] Section I. Eligibility and Funding Levels: "**Current/former CIRCLE partners:** Organizations that have received *one* CIRCLE subcontract (either an Urgent Action Contract or a full subcontract project) in an earlier round may propose a new project under this solicitation if they are based in one of the target countries. These organizations must propose new projects (not add-ons to current or former CIRCLE projects), be highly innovative and strategic, and score a minimum of 80 total points to be considered for funding. Organizations that have received *more than one* CIRCLE subcontract (either UACs or full subcontract projects) may NOT apply again under this solicitation, regardless of their country."

4. How did RLMs and best practice peer review teams contribute to project networking?

There were three major sources of project networking under CIRCLE in LA. The first was RSC members, discussed above. The second was the RLMs. Participants in the three launch meetings included Brazilian representatives only since funding constraints did not allow bringing participants from abroad. They came from NGOs, foundations, universities, ILO-IPEC, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), national and state government ministries (e.g., Education, Labor), Centers for Children and Adolescents, a corporate social responsibility organization, the Bahia state investment agency, women's studies and support centers, Secretariat for the Combat of Poverty and Social Inequality, and State Forum for Child Labor Eradication. The RLMs gave invitees the opportunity to meet NGOs from other countries and obtain a broader perspective of CIRCLE activities.

The third focus of project networking was the BP reviewers. Besides representatives from many of the groups listed above, reviewers also included an anthropologist, a film producer, and the director of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the United States. All in all, these three project mechanisms were an effective means of contributing to project networking throughout the Latin America region.

In terms of *horizontal* networking and communication among subcontractors, results have been mixed. Feedback from NGOs about the RLMs was largely positive as they not only appreciated the training aspect but also the opportunity to meet their colleagues and learn more about their planned activities under CIRCLE. However, once the NGO connections were made at the RLMs, there was not much subsequent followup as staff got caught up in the pressures of day-to-day work. There also seemed to be an expectation that WI should drive these contacts rather than NGOs being proactive. To its credit, WI did try to establish a regional listserv after Round 2, but staff constraints did not permit its active maintenance. The newsletters and website have also fostered information sharing but have not stimulated much concrete action. The regional office did as much as it could to facilitate networking in the absence of financial resources allocated to this area.

In sum, the potential synergies, networking, and cross-project learning among NGOs in Latin America have not been realized to their fullest potential.

5. What have been some of the challenges and issues in working with local NGOs and other local organizations?

In addition to the challenges mentioned elsewhere in this report, issues involved in working with local organizations in Latin America include—

- Security concerns, since many NGOs have targeted the most insecure, crime-ridden, and dangerous neighborhoods to work in. Taxi drivers in Natal, for example, were often reluctant to take CR staff to the CIRCLE communities, and it was very difficult for them to conduct home visits with parents at night. These circumstances obviously complicate child labor monitoring efforts.

- Donor "competition," as other projects often provide various material resources to beneficiaries, which can result in their conditioning their participation on the expectation of receiving something tangible in return. A variation of this is parents who send their kids back out to work if their *bono* is cut by the government.

- Donor "fatigue," as groups of teachers, for example, end up participating in a host of trainings and other extra work (e.g., curriculum redesign), much of it at night or on the weekends, and most (if not all) of it without remuneration. Their commitment can sometimes wear thin.

- Some challenges have been experienced by NGOs when they do not involve key school stakeholders early enough in the planning process and run into conflicts when trying to schedule project activities on the school calendar.

5.3.2   Conclusions

- The RSC process that WI developed for CIRCLE worked well in relying on outside experts to choose the strongest NGO proposals. BP reviewers have also provided key contributions to the project.

- Regional office staff did a good job of networking to the extent possible within budget and staffing constraints. National, departmental, and local networking was largely the responsibility of NGO partners.

- The RLMs were an important first step in horizontal networking among NGO partners, though these relationships never matured and cross-project exchange was nascent.

- In several cases, effective partnerships with a variety of entities have greatly expanded the radius of impact of CIRCLE NGOs and resources.

5.3.3   Recommendations

- In future global projects, funds should be budgeted by the implementing PVO for a project website (including local languages), periodic newsletters, and creation/maintenance of a listserv. Though NGOs could take the initiative, they tend to be more reactive and reliant on the lead organization.

- Some funds should also be budgeted to permit more explicit support to networking activities.

- After their intense initial involvement, many RSC members felt like they subsequently fell "out of the loop" regarding CIRCLE activities. It would also be good to find a way to keep them informed and involved during the implementation phase.

5.4   MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

5.4.1   Findings

> *1. What are the management strengths of this project, both at the global and regional levels?*

With 101 subcontracts in 23 countries around the world, the CIRCLE project represents a mammoth undertaking requiring considerable organizational and management skill. Despite the fact that this is the first time WI has overseen a project of such magnitude, its broad geographic presence and established capacity have served the organization well. Both HQ and the regional offices have done an excellent job of managing the associated complexity and heavy workload.

One of the management strengths of the project is the dedicated and well-qualified staff members in key positions—many of whom have been in place for all or most of CIRCLE I and II. Of particular note is the CIRCLE Director in HQ, who has served since the beginning. According to the USDOL officials interviewed, she has been "superb," provided good leadership, and helped to ensure productive relationships between USDOL and WI. Moreover, she has been the de facto institutional memory for the project as six different USDOL program managers have come and gone since 2002. The CIRCLE Project Manager provides important financial and technical support across regions and is especially adept at managing USDOL indicators.

In Latin America, the Deputy RM—who has served in this capacity since 2005 and was Acting RM for about five months prior to formalizing her position as Deputy—has also been involved with CIRCLE since its design. Because both she and the current Project Assistant are fluent in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, their skills have been critical in navigating the challenges of project management in three languages (see Section 5.1, question 7).

Complementing the CIRCLE staff is a strong cadre of volunteer professionals who have contributed to the project in a variety of ways—most notably by participating on RSCs, attending RLMs, and serving as BP reviewers. While their roles and contributions are detailed in other sections of this report, it should be noted that CIRCLE could not have accomplished all that it has without their in-kind support. WI staff has also dedicated considerable extra time serving as BP reviewers across regions.

Other management strengths include the centralization of global project information in HQ; good systematization of processes (e.g., BP review methodology) and data collection instruments (e.g., site visit reporting formats) to maximize cross-regional comparability; and a strong field presence as a "gateway" to closer connections with local organizations. Winrock has attempted to address the midterm evaluation (MTE) finding of "stovepiping" by fostering greater communication and information sharing among regions. Progress has been made in this area but could be deepened.

2. *Assess the quality and nature of the communication and coordination between HQ and field offices.*

Given the size and complexity of CIRCLE, it has been a challenge to systematize project information and stay on top of subcontract developments. Both HQ and regional office staff members have made valiant efforts to do so. Communication mechanisms include biweekly field reports from RMs to HQ regarding current events in the region as well as frequent phone calls and daily e-mails. The flow of information seems to be more from the field up to HQ (e.g., Spotlight Stories, BPs, logistics, wire transfers, feedback on documents), reflecting the nexus of on-the-ground implementation. Regional staff members appreciate the quick responses they receive from HQ, and the team seems to work very well together overall.

Regional office staff members in LA felt that HQ staff members have interacted with them less than other regions (e.g., the CIRCLE Director and Program Manager never attended an RLM or did site visits, although the first fulltime Project Manager and Group Managing Director attended the first RLM, and the Group Vice President attended the second). This lessened interaction likely reflects the fact that LA constitutes less than 18% of the overall CIRCLE portfolio, as well as the language issues and barriers that preclude HQ staff from reading source materials, interacting with NGOs and partners, and gaining a deeper understanding of LA issues.

Finally, worldwide staff members have gotten together three times: in Mali early in the project, and in HQ for two BP retreats (2005 and 2006). There is the possibility of one last meeting before CIRCLE II ends, which would be useful. The Deputy RM highlighted the value of these meetings in sharing experiences and information across regions, but noted that even more progress could be made in breaking down the existing stovepipes.

3. *What management areas, including technical and financial, could be improved?*

Project management by WI, including technical and financial, is generally very strong.

One area that could have been better was a more realistic estimation of the translation demands related to work in LA and the provision of a separate budget line item to adequately cover the human and financial resources required. Project networking and information exchange would have been enhanced by budgeting for items such as the CIRCLE website and regional newsletters, as well as a meeting of NGO subcontractors (possibly subregional) to focus more on midcourse implementation issues and lessons learned. Intra-CIRCLE learning and communication might have been enhanced by periodic conference calls between HQ and all regional offices.

In the financial area, NGOs were previously permitted to make changes in their budgets of up to 5% without a justification. However, since Round 3, they need a justification and subcontract amendment for any budget changes whatsoever. Although there is usually no impediment to approval from HQ, this requirement seems rather burdensome.

With regard to USDOL's comment that project processes (e.g., NGO selection, BP identification) could have been quicker, it is not clear if or how these cycles could have been condensed without sacrificing the level of participation from outside experts, which has provided such richness.

   4. *If the implementing organization did not have legal presence in the country prior to award, what impact did that have on project implementation? And if they were legally present?*

The only in-country presence WI has in LA is its regional office in Brazil, which opened in 1996. The office currently manages 16 other projects in addition to CIRCLE, one of which (BASTA)[17] also falls under WI's Empowerment and Civic Engagement focus area.

As discussed elsewhere, the primary impacts of WIs not having legal presence in other countries were the myriad challenges related to managing project implementation in three languages, and the high transportation costs of traveling within LA. If WI had had a legal presence in a Central or South American country, it would have been easier and cheaper to handle many of the NGO sites visits, and might also have provided an alternate venue for one of the RLMs. The downside of this scenario would have been WI staff based in Salvador not developing such a comprehensive and holistic understanding of NGO activities throughout the region, and non-CIRCLE staff in other offices not being able to provide capacity building.

In reality, NGO subcontractors outside Brazil were not prejudiced under the actual arrangement since WI staff made a concerted effort to avoid any type of favoritism and to establish close connections with *all* organizations under CIRCLE.

   5. *Was the management structure (U.S. HQ and three regional offices) able to provide sufficient oversight (site monitoring) and capacity-building of local organizations?*

While the CIRCLE management structure has allowed sufficient oversight and capacity building of NGOs, there has been an associated strain on regional staff in LA. Since August 2005, there has only been one fulltime equivalent position in the office to handle all project-related duties.[18] It would have been ideal to have two fulltime staff, but operating costs in Brazil are too high. Staffing and budget constraints did not allow the ideal of two site visits for every NGO, although oversight was provided in other ways (e.g., through phone and e-mail contact). Increasing site visits was important to CIRCLE and the LA NGOs with longer projects, AMF and CEIPA, received two site visits. In Round 3, WI planned to have two site visits. One NGO in Brazil (the other one has finished) and the two NGOs in Bolivia will receive a third visit in August.

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[17] The Brazil Anti-Trafficking project, funded by the U.S. State Department, aims to build the organizational capacity of NGOs in the state of Bahia (one of Brazil's main trafficking routes) to provide services for at-risk groups and trafficking survivors. It also strengthens coordination and cooperation among government agencies and civil society, creates awareness and knowledge about human trafficking in Brazil, and shares best practices and lessons learned.

[18] The Deputy RM worked on CIRCLE alone from August 2005 to July 2006. Since then, 70% of her time and 30% of the Project Assistant's time is devoted to CIRCLE, with the remainder going to BASTA.

Per regional staff, *"the workload takes away from some of our time with NGOs. And with the BP deliverable, it is essential that we truly understand projects and national contexts, see the working conditions [of NGOs] and what they're trying to do since it's not the same to read the news."* It is a testament to the dedication, hard work, and commitment of regional office staff that these objectives were largely accomplished under CIRCLE.

6. *How satisfied were the NGOs with the orientation, training, and support received by CIRCLE project staff?*

The NGO staff members interviewed for the evaluation provided overwhelmingly positive feedback about WI's support and orientation under CIRCLE. They lauded the productive relationships established with WI regional staff and the ease of communication in comments like: *"They answer us very quickly. Being in another city isn't an impediment. They are very patient with us and give us 100% support. They clarify our doubts and send us feedback on reports."* NGOs also greatly appreciated the assistance and guidance provided by WI staff members via e-mail/phone and in periodic site visits, and wished the visits could have been more frequent.

Input about the RLMs was also positive, with a few instances of differing opinions. NGOs thought the training was very good, understandable, and well-organized. They appreciated the meetings with government representatives and the opportunity to interact with current and prior grantees. However, several people noted that the RLM was more focused on systems, processes, and documentation and less on the themes/concepts related to child labor in various countries. They said they left the training "with an idea of how to do things, but not certitude…only practice allows you to perfect these systems in daily life since they are very complex."

One lesson learned was the importance of inviting two representatives—a technical manager/director and an administrative financial officer—from each subcontractor to the RLM. When the high number of awards in Round 2 permitted only project directors to attend, there were ramifications in their ability to understand the financial training as well as to subsequently transmit the technical knowledge to financial staff. This situation was further complicated by the fact that wire requests and financial reports are in English. The situation was remedied by having two people from each NGO attend the third RLM. In addition to improved reporting, the NGOs appreciated having the finance people there since they are normally uninvolved in the technical area and greatly benefited from this knowledge.

5.4.2 Conclusions

- WI staff has done an admirable job of managing a broad and complex set of activities with relatively few human resources. Part of this management reflects the relationships of trust and confidence that have been built with partner NGOs in LA despite the distance.

- NGOs are quite satisfied with the level of training, support, and capacity-building they have received under CIRCLE.

- Some NGOs have struggled with the attribution issue, i.e., separating out the impact or changes in projects that were directly attributable to CIRCLE activities when reality was not so delineated, and years of prior efforts have often laid the groundwork for progress.

5.4.3 Recommendations

- Future RLM training should include a few full case studies of illustrative project scenarios with real-life technical and financial issues. That way, NGOs could walk through thorny issues together with guidance and a collegial discussion.

- Future projects should be awarded for 12 to 18 months *minimum* to allow NGOs adequate time to build community trust and ownership and to address more of the root causes of child labor problems.

- USDOL should create a dedicated website (or portion of the current site) for EI implementers containing all relevant materials and documentation.

5.5 SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

5.5.1 Findings

1. *What steps have been taken so far to promote sustainability and continuation of education strategies for combating child labor beyond the life of the project?*

The steps taken on the part of WI were the provision of sustainability training in the RLMs, the requirement for NGOs to include sustainability sections in their subcontracts, the provision of CB assistance, the development of the BP publication, and project networking (e.g., connecting NGOs to donors and key stakeholders during site visits, sharing information on funding opportunities). As noted by the Deputy RM, "NGOs think of sustainability in a wider way as a result of the RLM training… We get them thinking about sustainability from the beginning, especially with short projects… CIRCLE helped them to reflect a lot, and they've applied this knowledge to other projects."

With regard to the NGO subcontracts, their prospects for sustainability are assessed under question 5 below. It should be noted that the continuation of many project elements (e.g., adoption of the curricula developed by PROCESO, CEBIAE, and ISAT; provision of after-school programs for PETI students by *Primeiro de Maio*; and expansion of the educational annex by OA) partly depends on government/ministry action and approval, so continued advocacy and pressure will be critical in the future. The important thing is the commitment of NGOs, students, teachers, parents, and community members to continuing CIRCLE ideas and/or activities, and this commitment is largely manifested in the LA region.

2. *Was the project's initial strategy for sustainability adequate and appropriate?*

WI's strategy to foster sustainability, outlined above, was appropriate within the context of CIRCLE implementation. Had more resources been available, however, it would have been helpful to ensure a minimum of two site visits per project in Latin America given the multifaceted benefits to NGOs.

One key point related to the MTE synthesis report finding that "All of the evaluations concluded that Winrock could not realistically be held responsible for the accomplishment of sustainability of a project that is a short-lived endeavor with a life cycle of one or two years." Moreover, it was not clear whether the inclusion of sustainability as one of the four overarching CIRCLE goals had an impact on NGO projects in LA, since none of them chose sustainability as a primary or secondary objective in their proposals.

Given the relatively short timeframes (all subcontracts except two were less than two years) and small amounts of funding in LA (all subcontracts US$100,000 or less), it is important to have realistic expectations about project sustainability and to recognize that most NGOs accomplished a great deal within the given constraints.

3. *What appears to be the project's impact on (a) individual beneficiaries (children, parents, teachers), (b) partner organizations (NGOs, community groups, schools), and (c) government and policy structures in terms of system-wide change on education and child labor issues?*

5.5.2 Impact on Individual Beneficiaries

One important gauge regarding changes in student beneficiaries is their mothers. Those interviewed noted a number of positive impacts on their children:

- "Our children are happier now that the school is better. They have learned much more, and the tutoring/pedagogic support is very helpful."

- "My son wants to study now; before he didn't do anything and the teacher would call us all the time."

- "He doesn't fight anymore; he's not in the street causing trouble."

- "My daughter was very nervous and shy before, but she has changed."

- "When my kid gets older, s/he wants to be a doctor…police officer…teacher…lawyer… soccer teacher…in the military…dentist."

- "We have to support our children in whatever they want to do."

Children themselves noted the dangerous conditions surrounding them—including drug trafficking, prostitution, crime, guns, death, discrimination, racism, and poverty—and the lack of safe, healthy options such as parks for them to play and spend their free time. Many kids

participating in CIRCLE field trips (e.g., *Primeiro de Maio*, OA) literally left these communities for the first time in their lives and caught a glimpse of other possibilities. Children were unanimous in their praise of educational activities based on active, playful (*lúdico*) methodologies and were excited to participate in sports, art, theatre, music, dance, etc. Finally, most expressed great hope and ambition for the future, including university studies and a professional life.

Many people highlighted the value of increased parental involvement and the new things they had learned about how to support their children in school and at home. Comments from mothers signal improved parenting skills, self-esteem, and empowerment:

- "Before I used to spank my son, now I talk to him more… It's not just hit, hit—you have to converse and talk."

- "We realized that our children are talented."

- "We learned about the rights of women, although there are many people who ignore them—I learned more here [in the Mothers' Group] than in school."

- "I learned not to stay quiet—we have to protect ourselves."

In the words of CIRCLE students:

- "We learn to be independent."

- "We learn things we don't know, like you can be someone in life."

- "I used to be in the street a lot, now I'm obedient and a good person."

- "Before I used to fight a lot and I was a rebel; now I'm calm and I respect my parents."

- "If we weren't here, we would be in the street learning to steal; here we learn to develop ourselves."

- "I learned you should always listen."

Teachers and school directors noted the value of the training they received on topics such as how to deal more effectively with the issues faced by child laborers and at-risk youth; how to revise the curriculum to make it more responsive to their needs; how to dialogue and work more productively with parents; and how to identify/monitor situations of CL, violence, and exploitation. Teachers especially appreciated it because their training is often content-driven and not focused on methodology/pedagogy. One teacher said, *"The project allows reflection regarding social conditions and the role of education in transforming lives."* Finally, teachers/directors said CIRCLE students tend to demonstrate better behavior and attendance, more participation, and better math/reading skills. Kids participating in after-school *Cluberê*, for example, often win the *Nota 1000* (top student) program at their school, and the director noted "they have a different kind of potential; they get good preparation."

5.5.3   Impact on Partner Organizations

As discussed throughout this report, CIRCLE has contributed to strengthening the capacity of NGOs in LA in a variety of ways. They are now better equipped as organizations with more rigorous systems, and their ability to deal with child labor issues through education has been enhanced. Through CIRCLE, NGOs have had the opportunity to foster greater local ownership and to deepen their ties with communities. Since most of the NGOs already have a long history of work in this area, their efforts will undoubtedly continue post-CIRCLE.

5.5.4   Impact on Government and Policy Structures

The following are examples of policy impact accomplished by four of the NGOs who have worked on this objective under CIRCLE:

- **ISAT** had the Regional Department of Education of Ayacucho (Peru) certify the teachers training and curriculum developed.

- In March 2007, the municipality of Panajachel (Guatemala) launched the results of the social audit of the Municipal Plan for Children and Adolescents, established in 2006 by **PAMI** under CIRCLE. The objective of the plan was to promote children and adolescents' rights to education, health care, and leisure, and protection against drug use, maltreatment, sexual abuse, and labor exploitation. The document testifies that the plan reached its goals and objectives and the municipality will continue to budget for Education for All (EFA).

- **CENDHEC** mobilized civil society and the government to revise and update the Municipal Plan to Prevent and Eradicate Child Labor. The plan was approved by the Municipal Council for the Rights of Children and Adolescents and endorsed in the *National Gazette*. It includes 18 actions, seven focused directly on education. These actions included promoting activities to insert families of youth workers (under age 16) in programs focused on professional training and income generation, and providing CB to municipal educators, teachers, and social workers on the rights of children, including the issue of child labor.

- **CEIPA** developed a national model, COMUNA (*Consejo Municipal de la Niñez y Adolescencia*), composed of 19 children and adolescents elected by other youth (some of whom were project beneficiaries) to represent this subpopulation within the municipality—including the issue of child labor. It was the first time that children and adolescents officially represented themselves in Guatemala. CEIPA also reached an agreement with the Ministry of Education to implement an alternative curriculum in nonformal education systems.

4. *Are local organizations able to secure resources to sustain activities?*

Discussion of this point is covered under question 5 below.

5. *What lessons could be learned to date in terms of the project's accomplishments and weaknesses in terms of sustainability of interventions?*

Key lessons learned pertaining to sustainability are listed in Section VI. This section assesses the accomplishments and challenges experienced by each of the NGOs visited in terms of the likelihood of sustainability of CIRCLE activities.

Primeiro de Maio. CIRCLE resources enabled *Primeiro de Maio* to take *Cluberê* to the next level by improving and expanding its infrastructure and nonformal educational services. Since the subcontract ended in December 2006, *Cluberê* continues serving about 300 youth per year and has retained the existing teaching staff. Municipal government payments (primarily through PETI) cover about 45% of *Primeiro de Maio*'s budget. An Italian NGO sponsors 40+ students and provides funding for special activities. Some funding (about US$200 per month) comes from the dues paid by 900 community association members, and they also mobilize the community to raise more funds in times of need. Taking into account all of these funding sources, *Primeiro de Maio* still has a monthly deficit of US$5,000 which it is trying to address through fundraising and partnerships. In the words of the director, *"Under CIRCLE we had everything of good quality, now things are continuing but they are more barebones... But there is no doubt that* Cluberê *will continue in the future."*

Casa Renascer. According to staff, CIRCLE helped CR "realize more the importance of direct work in schools and with communities regarding violence prevention. This is going to expand our approach in the future." CR established an adolescent commission in each school with the idea that they will do outreach and replication in their communities about what they have learned. Teachers in one school are developing a project for CIRCLE-trained teachers to replicate training to the rest of the students in the next school year. CR also handed over their materials and methodologies to the schools for continued use. Because CR had not worked with the target communities before CIRCLE, it took some time to establish trust and open communication with them. Once that was achieved, however, "The community felt we were abandoning them at the end of CIRCLE… They need more time to strengthen themselves, and they need more organization and support."

CENDHEC. Prospects for sustainability of CIRCLE activities are good based on several factors: (1) CENDHEC obtained cofinancing for many CIRCLE activities from *Terre des Hommes* (TdH). Much of TdH's support is complementary and its project continues until 2009; (2) CENDHEC has been involved with many donor projects over the years (e.g., ILO, Save the Children—UK) so it is both well-connected and highly regarded; (3) The group of youth monitors and multipliers that CENDHEC has formed are well-equipped to replicate training, participate in events, and be protagonists in this field; (4) There is the issue of the Municipal Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of the Adolescent Worker in Recife, which goes through 2009 (including assigned budget). CENDHEC is working with civil society to monitor its implementation, and the first year of the plan will be evaluated upon termination of their CIRCLE project.

On the other hand, CENDHEC's training of PETI monitors only has a chance of being sustainable if municipal hiring policies are changed from the current two-year internship and/or CENDHEC can offer "training of trainers" to municipal staff members who will take long-term responsibility for replication. Both scenarios are questionable.

PROCESO. Since its six-month subcontract ended in December 2005, PROCESO provided an interesting window on sustainability. Because PROCESO's niche is methodology rather than direct services, its partnership with *Casa Mitaí* (a formal/nonformal education center for child laborers) was critical under CIRCLE. Although the development and pilot testing of the educational software went well and students were excited to use it, various problems with the computer lab led to the software falling by the wayside over the past year. PROCESO has been unsuccessful in its attempts thus far to find donor funding to flesh out the software prototype and curriculum guidelines developed under CIRCLE. If/when it is finalized, the educational game could be broadly used and adapted in formal and nonformal education systems, internet cafes, etc., to reach child laborers and other at-risk youth in Bolivia.

Obispo Anaya. There are very good prospects for sustainability of CIRCLE activities since OA has one of the most comprehensive sets of partnerships of the NGOs visited. It works with Christian Children's Fund on student sponsorship, *Fe y Alegría* on pedagogical issues, *Voces Libres* (a Swiss foundation) on various school activities and vocational training for parents, Catholic University on environmental training, and Harry Williams Hospital (a Salvation Army program) on mobile health care. *Voces Libres* has been especially important under CIRCLE since it provides complementary support on teachers' salaries, after-school tutoring (*apoyo pedagógico*), and school infrastructure (with CIRCLE equipping/furnishing). *Voces* is currently finishing two new classrooms to cover up to sixth grade and plans to construct more buildings to offer at least middle school. Its support—as well as that of the other partners—will continue once CIRCLE ends in October. The school director has already obtained Ministry funding for six post-CIRCLE teaching slots and believes the newly formed mothers' club and school council will both continue operating. Finally, families in Kara Kara should soon start receiving the government's new *Bono Juancito Pinto*—a payment of US$25 conditional on school attendance.

CEBIAE. CEBIAE is a well-established organization that has experience working with donors such as ILO and UNICEF. Sustainability prospects for its activities are positive since the work started under CIRCLE falls within a larger five-year organizational plan for Potosí that has funding in place through 2009. Although *Red Interinstitucional para la Niñez y Adolescencia* (RIPNA)—the inter-institutional network formed to focus on youth issues, including child labor—will clearly not be sustainable after less than a year of operation, CEBIAE plans to continue its support and guidance over the coming years to make the network autonomous (i.e., as it did successfully with the *Foro Educativo Nacional*). The plan also envisions support to 20 more schools—ideally building on the curriculum redesign work done by teachers at the 10 CIRCLE schools and gaining support for replication by the District Department of Education. Finally, since *Voces Libres* also operates in Potosí, CEBIAE was very interested to learn about OA's partnership model.

In the words of CEBIAE staff:

> *"This is a child labor project that doesn't work directly with kids—but it will benefit them much more over the long-run and changes will be more sustainable through improved policies."*

6. Could projects be scaled up for funding by the government or another donor?

Each of the projects mentioned above could be scaled up in whole or in part. However, the ability to effect such replication partly depends on factors in the enabling environment that are outside the direct control of NGOs (e.g., government policies, provision of complementary Ministry resources, political will to fulfill legal obligations).

The experience under CIRCLE has been invaluable in demonstrating the successful elements of these projects and showing NGOs and communities what it is possible to achieve in a relatively short period of time. Therefore projects are "ripe" for replication.

7. How effective has the project been in documenting and communicating good practices? Could this and other materials be used in the wider community?

For information on this point, please refer to the extensive discussion of BP in Section 5.1, question 11.

5.5.5   Conclusions

- In the communities visited, NGO subcontractors have done a good job of fostering local involvement/ownership of activities, working effectively with various governmental and nongovernmental partners, and increasing public awareness about the hazards of child labor and the value of education. These activities bode well for the sustainability of many CIRCLE efforts.

- There is not necessarily a correlation between a project's length and funding and its sustainability. OA, for example, has done an admirable job of laying the groundwork for sustainability through its complementary partnerships—and it only received a one-year award of US$24,000.

- Of the six NGOs visited for this evaluation, their institutional histories ranged from a minimum of 15 years to more than 30 years. It is not a coincidence that such well-established and experienced organizations have proven effective implementing partners.

- In some cases, NGOs were providing services that *should* have been the purview of government (e.g., training of PETI monitors by CENDHEC) but were not being covered because of budget constraints, poor/inexistent policies, and/or weak public institutional capacity. In these cases, NGOs should combine service delivery with public pressure and advocacy efforts to try to address the underlying systemic weaknesses.

- As a result of its five years of experience implementing CIRCLE I and II and involving various departments within the organization, WI is now at a different level of maturity, knowledge, and networking than it was in 2002. It is well-positioned to continue this type of global child labor work in the future.

5.5.6   Recommendations

- WI HQ should strategize and develop its ideas about what a "CIRCLE III" project would look like—including how to scale-up some of the successful BPs, innovations, and lessons learned under CIRCLE, and how to operationalize the content of the BP Compendium with NGO partners combating child labor. Closer partnerships with the ILO should also be sought.

- WI should also seek funding to continue its work with NGO partners in select countries. One opportunity to do so is ILAB's upcoming solicitation for applications to address exploitive child labor internationally.[19] Since Bolivia is one of 10 target countries, WI is well-positioned to take its CIRCLE work with PROCESO, OA, and CEBIAE to another level. All three partners are good implementers, have identified critical ongoing needs in their communities, and have activities ripe for expansion.

- One potential post-CIRCLE mechanism for NGOs who wish to scale up their innovative ideas is the World Bank's Development Marketplace,[20] a competitive grant program that identifies and supports emerging development ideas at both the global and country level. The DM is also interested in fostering innovation, defined as the "extent to which an idea varies from current approaches. It is interested in projects that target a new beneficiary group or geographic area; introduce a new technology, delivery method, financing method or support process; employ a new combination of existing processes or technologies; use old technologies for new purposes; or propose new partners for delivering services or producing goods."

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[19] See the April 26, 2007 Notice of Intent at http://www.dol.gov/_sec/regs/fedreg/notices/2007007962.htm.
[20] DM awards range from US$50,000 to US$200,000. For information see http://go.worldbank.org/PPLLZDYU70.

VI   LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

- The holistic approach undertaken by most NGOs in LA to closely involve four key stakeholder groups—students, parents, schools, and communities—in efforts to mitigate child labor through education has proven very effective. Ownership and participation by all four groups is vital, although earning their trust and building confidence is not an overnight proposition.

- Through its support to a wide variety of short-term innovative projects, CIRCLE has successfully planted the seeds for longer term impact, realizing that impact is now in the hands of its NGO partners, who will continue to work in CIRCLE communities.

- It is important to complement community-based actions with advocacy efforts to institute new policies and/or public pressure to implement existing policies. Only in this way will the enabling environment become more positive over time.

- Differences in cultural contexts—particularly in the case of countries with large indigenous populations (e.g., Bolivia, Guatemala, Ecuador, and Peru) where children are viewed as key contributors to family income and survival—are a significant factor in combating child labor and require a different type of approach.

- Public awareness-raising about the hazards of child labor is a necessary but not sufficient part of the solution in the face of dire poverty and serious socioeconomic challenges. Efforts must be made to provide complementary support addressing the root causes—not just the symptoms—of why children work. These include a lack of opportunities for parents, often stemming from their own limited education, and a lack of viable personal and professional options for youth.

- Investing the time in developing comprehensive partnerships with a variety of entities can exponentially increase the radius of impact of a project and more effectively address the needs of beneficiaries. Such partnerships also foster the longer term sustainability of efforts.